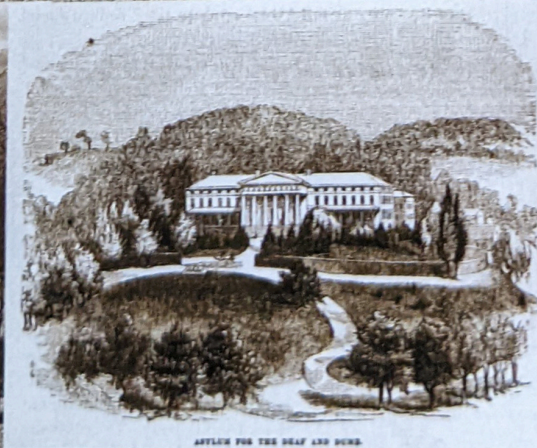


AUGUSTA

HISTORICAL BULLETIN







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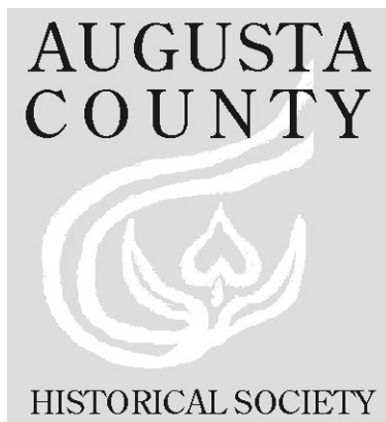


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Augusta Historical Bulletin: Editorial Policy

The editors of the *Augusta Historical Bulletin* welcome submissions relating to any topic or period in the history of Augusta County, Virginia, and its wider environs. Submissions may take the form of articles, research notes, edited documents, or indexes to historical documents. Other formats might be acceptable, but prospective authors of such submissions are encouraged to consult with a member of the editorial board. With rare exceptions, the *Bulletin* does not publish manuscripts that focus exclusively on genealogical matters. Authors should strive to make their contributions accessible to a broad readership. In matters of form and style, authors should adhere to the guidelines and strictures set forth in the *Chicago Manual of Style*, 15th ed., or Kate L. Turabian, et al., *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 6th ed., both of which are widely available in libraries and bookstores. A style sheet, prepared by the editors of the *Bulletin*, is available upon request. Authors should submit four double-spaced copies of their manuscripts, with endnotes where applicable, and include photocopies of any illustrations. Upon acceptance of the manuscript for publication, authors must provide an electronic copy of it, as well as publishable-quality illustrations.

Manuscripts or requests for style sheets should be sent to: The Augusta County Historical Society, Attention: Bulletin Editors, P.O. Box 686, Staunton, Virginia 24402-0686. Please try to submit proposed manuscripts by June 1, 2013. Queries may also be sent to: Nancy Sorrells (lotswife@comcast.net) or Katharine Brown (klbrown@cfw.com).





The history and architecture of Staunton's Temple House of Israel

By Dr. Ruth E. Chodrow, V.M.D.

Editor's Note: Dr. Ruth Chodrow, congregational member and past president of the Staunton synagogue, presented the program from which this article is derived at the fall meeting of the Augusta County Historical Society on Sunday, November 11, 2012, at the temple on East Market Street. Dr. Chodrow has been researching the history of the congregation for several years. A reception followed the program in the fellowship hall of the synagogue.

Early History of the Congregation:

There is no record of when the first Jews came to Staunton, but by the late nineteenth century there was a thriving community. In 1876, Major Alexander Hart founded the congregation known as the Temple House of Israel. At first, the congregation worshipped informally in homes. In 1885, trustees of the congregation purchased the former Hoover School on Kalorama Street in Staunton from Francis.T. Stribling for \$600.¹ The congregation first met in this building in February 1885. The building, which dates back to 1837, had been a military school and, during the Civil War, a meeting-place for Confederate officers. Its last use in the twentieth century was as Welch's Upholstery.

The first official meeting of the congregation took place on February 1, 1885 in the Kalorama street building. The minutes listed twenty-four members. At that meeting, the congregation formally named Major Hart as president and elected other officers. Dues were assessed at eight dollars per family. All the temple members pledged to close their places of business by 7 p.m. on Fridays in order to attend "Divine Worship Services" at 7:30.² The minutes included an address by Major Alexander Hart, an extract of which follows.

Nine years ago the little band of Israelites here had no congregation or place of worship; the only Jewish organization was a club formed for social amusement. The members of the club, after mature delib-



Staunton Va February 1st 1885
At the first meeting of the congregation
"House of Israel", held at the new
synagogue on Kalorama Street at 10
o'clock A.M.
Alex^r Hart in the chair who called
meeting to order.
Leon Weinberg acted as secretary.
He called the following members
present, J L Barth, Louis Cohen Jr
his Cohen Sr, Isidore Cohen, Samuel Cohen,
Solomon Cohen, Alex^r Hart, G Kirsh,
H Kilb, Saul Klingenstein, A Loeb,
Leb, M B Oberdorfer, Saul Shultz,
Hackerman, Leon Weinberg, B Weinberg,
G Strauss, Solomon Switzer, Abe
Switzer, Julius Switzer,
present Louis Eisenman, Isidore Kirsh
Moritz Witz.
All above named members signed
constitution to be active members.

Minutes from the organizational meeting of Staunton's Jewish citizens in order to form a house of worship.

eration, concluded to organize a congregation. This congregation has moved like the ark of old, from place to place, finding itself frequently in disagreeable quarters, troubles have often assailed the congregation, and several times the disturbing elements have almost brought about complete and final ruin. Hope seemed extinguished, but the little band worked steadily with their flag of Faith and Religion flying defiantly. God's protective arm saved us from ruin.... We are assembled here this morning in this building, to be used as a synagogue, as permanent home for the congregation.³

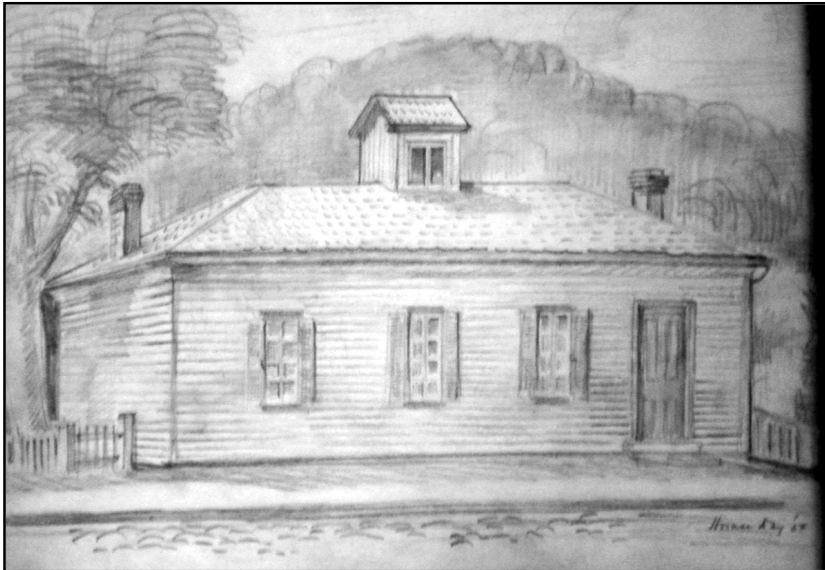


The first mention of a religious school appears in the minutes of September 1887. The board voted to present five dollars to the “Sabbath School” for books and supplies. A mention of Sabbath School occurred again in 1895, as being run by Miss Switzer and Mrs. Josie Loeb on Saturday mornings. In 1904, the schedule changed so that the Sabbath School met on Sunday mornings.⁴

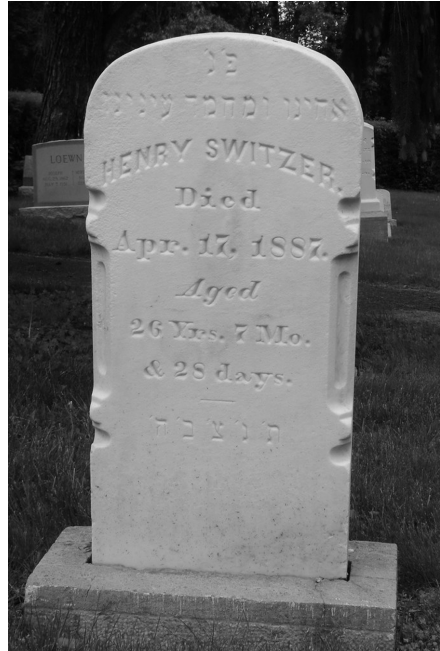
Memories of the Kalorama Street building come from a congregant, Anne Goldberg:

I remember the old building (on Kalorama Street). You came in by a door on the side, turned left, and you faced the bimah (n.b. - the dais where the ark was located). It was a very plain building. There were wooden pews on either side and a central aisle. The windows were plain glass, and the ceiling was flat and low. There was a wooden lectern and a wooden ark, and wooden chairs on the side of the lectern. The building was heated by a stove during winter; it would get very hot in the summer. We would get twenty to thirty people for the high holidays. The old building was just a hall - when we moved to the new building, I was very impressed. It was so unusual with the minarets, and the interior was very comfortable. I especially liked the pews with the cushions.⁵

In 1885, the congregation appointed a committee of three to investigate a burial ground. The committee, in April 1886, found an



An artist's rendering of the first temple building in Staunton.



The congregation's cemetery was established in 1886 on North Augusta Street. It is still in active use today.

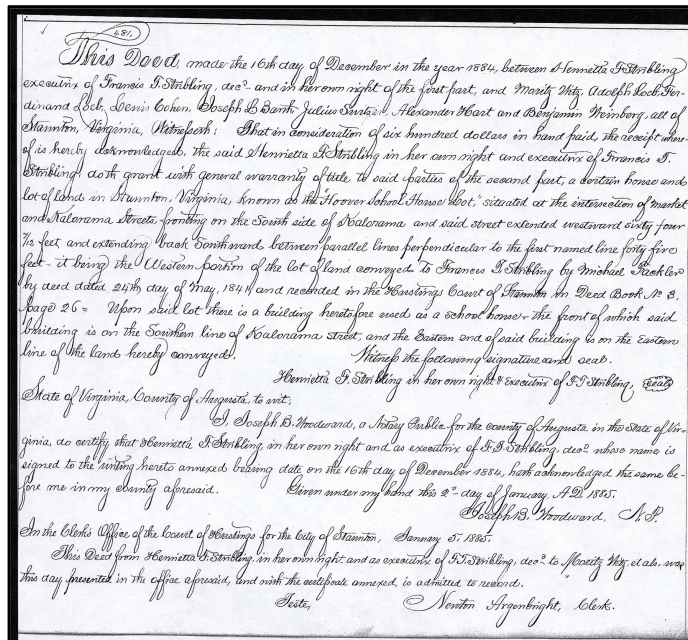


area of one and a half acres suitable for a cemetery on Valley Pike, now North Augusta Street. The lot, located a half-mile from the city limits, belonged to E.J. Dudley. Purchase of the ground took place in June 1886 for \$150. Dudley then donated seventy-five dollars to the congregation, making the total cost to the congregation just seventy-five dollars for the cemetery.⁶ It is still in use today. The earliest known burial, that of Henry Switzer, occurred in 1887.⁷

How the current building came to be

The story goes that sometime in 1924, Abraham Weinberg, a prominent merchant, stood up in the Kalorama Street building one day and said, "I'm tired of worshipping in something that looks like a warehouse. I'll put up half the money for a real synagogue if the congregation will put up the other half."⁸ He did and they did. A plot of land was purchased from Mary Baldwin College on North Market Street for \$7,150 on November 6, 1924.⁹ The laying of the cornerstone for the new building took place in 1925. The total cost for the synagogue building was \$17,000.

The congregation engaged the prestigious architectural firm of T.J. Collins and Son to design the new temple. The company had al-



The Staunton deed showing the purchase of the lot for the current synagogue.



The temple cornerstone was laid in 1925 as is indicated here. The Jewish calendar year is also reflected in a second stone.

ready designed a number of other Staunton landmarks such as St. Francis Catholic Church, the Augusta County Courthouse, the Valley National Bank Building, and many others. Sam Collins designed the building in the Moorish Revival style, a popular architectural fashion around the turn of the century.

The firm of Charles Connick Associates (in business from 1912 to 1986) created the stained glass windows for the synagogue. The studios, based in Boston, had some of the most celebrated stained glass artisans in the country. The company designed the great rose window in the church of St. John the Divine in New York City, as well as over 5,000 commissions for churches, libraries, and hospitals. All the glass in the temple is original Connick glass. The windows were fabricated in Boston and shipped down by train to Staunton.

Each of the six tall windows in the sanctuary has an emblem that shows a plant that grows in Israel – grapes, fig, olive, pome-



granate, etc. The glass is textured in a style reminiscent of medieval stained glass. There are also six smaller rectangular windows, two small circular windows, one large half-round, a large round memorial window, and an interior screen of clear glass. All the windows are original Connick and none have been replaced. The total cost of the Connick glass for the building was \$700 for the sixteen windows and the clear interior screen.¹⁰

Sam Collins was obviously pleased with the result of commissioned windows. In a letter dated August 28, 1925, he wrote to Charles Connick:

Dear Sir:

The glass for the Synagogue, this city, has just been placed and we wish to take occasion to say to you that it is in the exact tone and harmony with the simplicity of the building and that it satisfied us more than any stained glass work that has ever been placed in any buildings of ours.

We know, of course, that had more money been available much better glass could have been procured, but it is often the greatest test to procure fitness and tone with modest appropriations. We feel that you have accomplished this in the glass, perfectly.

Please accept our thanks and be assured of our desire to secure your services on our future work.

Yours very sincerely,

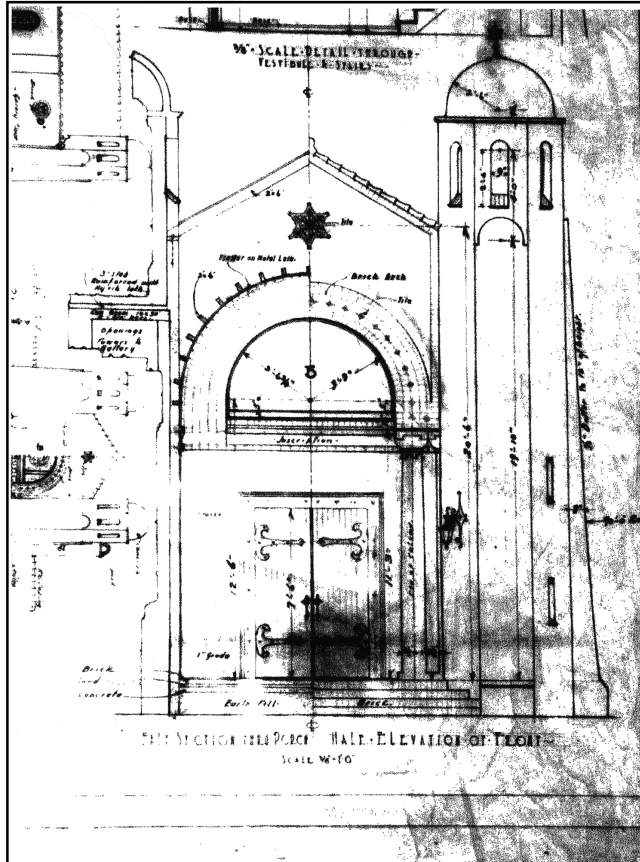
T.J. Collins and Son¹¹

W.T. Mass had made the lectern for eight dollars for use in the Kalorama Street building. The congregation still uses it today, just as Major Alexander Hart did.

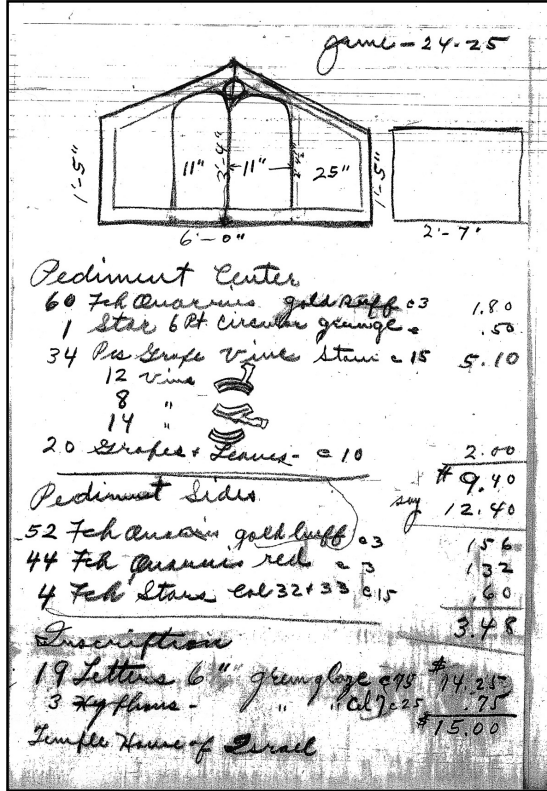
The tiles in the sanctuary are a product of the Moravian Pottery and Tile Works in Doylestown, Pennsylvania. The allowance for the tiles was seventy-five dollars.¹²

The central point of any synagogue is the ark, which holds the Torah scrolls. Our ark is cast concrete; above the scrolls is a representation of the Ten Commandments. The scrolls consist of the five books of Moses, hand-written in Hebrew on vellum. On Sabbath and some holidays, the scrolls are taken out and read. Our small temple has four scrolls, which were donated by the Walters and Goldenberg families.

A south bay on the other side of the bimah was added in 1947, and the back of temple was enlarged to make room for a kitchen and small social hall. Sam Collins, who had originally designed the temple,



Sam Collins, of the firm T.J. Collins & Son, designed the temple. Seen here is a detail from the temple blueprints as well as two stained glass windows requested by Collins.



The tiles in the sanctuary are a product of the Moravian Pottery and Tile Works in Doylestown, Pennsylvania. Sam Collins sketched his idea for tile placement at the top of the page, while the finished tiles are seen in the bottom photograph.



also designed these two expansions. In 1965, the social hall was extended out yet further to accommodate the growing religious school.

In 1929 the congregation joined the national organization of Reform Jewish congregations, then known as the Union of American Hebrew Congregations. It is now the Union for Reform Judaism.

Notable Members of the Congregation

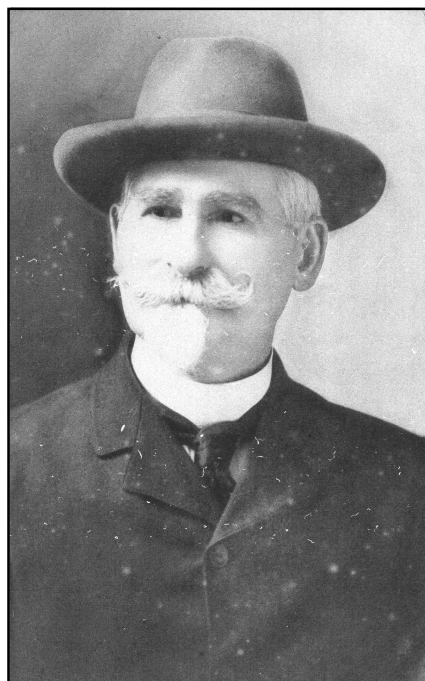
Major Alexander Hart 1839-1911

Major Hart's grandfather, also Alexander Hart, was born in Portsmouth, England. He and his wife and eight children sailed to America in 1828. Major Hart's father, Isaac, was twelve years old at the time.

Grandfather Alexander Hart, a goldsmith and watchmaker, became the hazzan (service leader) at congregation B'nai Jeshurun in New York City. In 1836 he re-married a Dutch-born widow who had family in New Orleans, and moved there.

In 1838, probably in New Orleans, Isaac Hart, Alexander's father, married Julia Cohen, whose family had also come over from England in 1838. Isaac Hart was deeply involved in the civic, commercial, and religious life of his adopted city. A silversmith, Isaac became involved in the retail shirt trade in New Orleans. Eventually he became secretary and then president of Shaarei Chesed congregation. Isaac also was the vice president of the Association for the Relief of Jewish Widows and Orphans, an organization to help those whose husbands and fathers had died in one of the many yellow fever epidemics that swept through New Orleans. He was also the secretary of the Livery Hose Company, a firefighting organization, and the secretary of the Louisiana Guards.¹³

Alexander Hart was the eldest of the twelve children of Isaac and Julia Hart. Born in New Orleans in 1839, he started out his adult life as a store clerk. When war broke out, he joined the 2nd company



Major Alexander Hart



Major Hart, left, seen at the same podium that is in use today (above).

of the Orleans Cadets, Louisiana Militia. He was appointed first lieutenant of this company, which later became company E, 5th Louisiana Infantry, and eventually joined the brigade known as the Louisiana Tigers. On his promotion to captain on February 22, 1862, the residents of New Orleans presented him with a handsome sword.¹⁴

Major Hart's military career

Hart was part of the victory at Second Battle of Winchester, and his unit helped pushed back Union troops at the Battle of Smithfield Crossing. They captured numerous Union troops at the Battle of Strasburg. He participated in the Battle of Chancellorsville and was with Major General Jubal Early's division at Fredericksburg.

Major Hart suffered a serious leg injury at the battle of Antietam. He was taken to a private house after the battle. The surgeon said that the leg had to be amputated. The lady of the house begged the surgeon to wait and give her a chance to nurse Hart back to health, proclaiming, "So young and handsome a man should not lose a leg." She did indeed nurse him back to health, and after the war, Major Hart visited his friend every year. Once during his visit, the lady's



daughter-in-law complained that there was no ham on the table. Major Hart's hostess replied, "No, there shall be no ham on my table while my 'Jewish son' is here."

Major Hart's mother, Julia Hart, also came to his aid after he was transferred to Richmond to recover from his injury. The following is an extract from the diary of Elizabeth Hart Workum, sister to Alexander Hart (private collection):

In 1861 the Civil War broke out. Two of my older brothers went to war. My oldest brother (Alexander) was in the battle of Sharpsburg, Virginia. His comrades were killed all around him and he was severely wounded. He was taken off the battlefield, by some of his comrades to a friend's home. All communication was cut off between the Union and Confederate lines so we never knew if our dear ones were killed or wounded, except by reading the lists in the newspapers. Mother saw my brother's name in the list of the wounded – she left me to care for the family and went thru the dangerous lines. She had to have a passport to go to her son who was taken to Richmond, Virginia, and went thru many hardships on the journey. It was three weeks before we at home heard thru relatives that Mother had reached her destination. Thank God she was able to nurse my brother to convalescence.

Major Hart was on medical leave for five months, returned to participate in the Chancellorsville campaign, was injured again at Gettysburg, and certified as permanently disabled. However, he demanded a review and rejoined his regiment to participate in the battle of Kernstown. He was captured in the third Battle of Winchester against Major General Philip Sheridan in September 1864. Major Hart was released through a prisoner-of-war exchange in November of that year. He wrote in his diary on 30 December 1864: "Started to see my fiancée and all the folks. All glad to see me. Leonna cried some. Staid in Richmond, having a good time generally, during months of November, December."¹⁵

Details of Major Hart's war career can be found in the book *The Jewish Confederates* by Robert Rosen (University of South Carolina Press, Columbia, South Carolina, 2000).

The only reference indicating how Major Hart came to know about Staunton is from this order from the Provost Marshal:

Provost Marshal's office, Richmond, July 4th, 1864

Special order:

Having received orders from Gen'l Ro't E. Lee to send all soldiers in



this city belonging to the 2nd Corps A.N. Va to their command by way of Staunton, Major Alex'r Hart, 5th La Reg't will take command of a detachment of 250 men of said corps and such commissioned officers as may report to him for duty. He will take said detachment to Staunton, Va, by rail and thence, with all dispatch, to said command, wherever it may be, reporting to Lt. Gen'l J.A. Early. Lt. Masters will furnish transportation
Signed: J'st. Carrington, Maj'r and Pro. Marshal.

In 1866, Major Hart returned to Richmond, Virginia, where he married seventeen-year old Leonora Levy, his fiancée for two years, and went into business with her family. Later Alexander and Leonora Hart moved to Staunton, where he started a branch of Levy Brothers, the family dry goods store at 110 West Main Street, now West Beverley Street. Hart founded the congregation of the Temple House of Israel in 1876. He was elected president in 1885 and held that position for eighteen years.

Hart's store failed, and in 1893 he turned all the contents of the store over to a trustee, to sell to satisfy his creditors.¹⁶ He then relocated to Norfolk with his wife and four children, and is listed there as working for the A&D Ry Company as a soliciting agent. Major Hart was active in the Confederate War Veterans, serving as a commander in the Pickett-Buchanan Camp in Norfolk. He was reported to have led services at the Ohel Shalom temple there when the rabbi was absent.

He died in Norfolk in 1911 at the age of seventy-six and was buried there. His tombstone reads: Major Alexander Hart, 5th La Inf. C.S.A.¹⁷

The Klotz Brothers

Amos and Jake Klotz were itinerant peddlers. They came down to the Shenandoah Valley on their way from Hagerstown in a horse and wagon, buying up items and selling them for salvage. They got as far as Staunton and their horse died. Not being able to afford a new horse, they went into the junkyard and salvage business.¹⁸ Their younger brother Morris eventually joined them in Staunton, and they formed the Klotz Brothers Company. The business prospered, and eventually needed a building of its own. The Klotz Brothers salvage business was housed in the building which they erected in 1899 and which their firm used until 1988. This building now houses the Sunspots Studio.



The Klotz building, top, is used by a glass blowing company today. The middle photograph shows a detail of the building. The mezuzah in the bottom photograph was once in the Klotz building but is now on display at the temple.

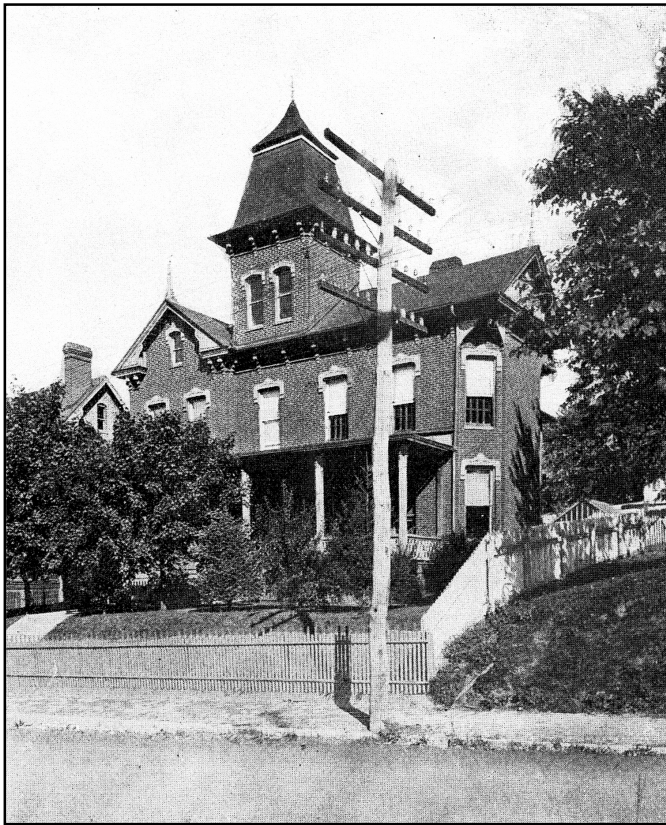


All Jewish homes and dwellings keep a mezuzah on the door. Inside the decorative case at the temple is a quotation from Deuteronomy. The reason is the Biblical injunction, "And these words, which I command you this day....'you shall write upon the doorposts of your house, and upon your gates.'" When Sunspots moved into the Klotz brothers building, they gave the building's mezuzah to the congregation, and it is now in the historical exhibits case.

Barth and Weinberg families

Simon Barth opened a clothing store in the early 1870s. Upon his death, his brother Joseph Barth took over the store. The store was located on the corner opposite Court House Square.

In 1895, Abraham Weinberg got off the train from which he had traveled to Baltimore. When he encountered the chief of police, he asked where there was a vacant store. When the policeman learned that the stranger wanted to open a clothing store, he told the young



The residence of J.L. Barth

STYLISH
WINTER SUITS
 —AND—
OVERCOATS,
 Irrespective of Weight, Height or Build.
 Our store is prepared to equip all,
 and no man whether of unusu-
 al figure or not, need fear
 that choice for him is limited
 to a few patterns or designs.—
 There is a selection so broad
 that few men look them all
 over. Courteous salesmen save
 your time by speedily finding
 any kind you describe. Just
 received a full line of **RAIN**
COATS.
Jos. L. Barth & Co.
 9 South Augusta St.,
STAUNTON, VA.

*Advertisements from the
 Barth and Weinberg cloth-
 ing stores.*

**WEINBERG
 CLOTHING CO.**
 We are prepared to show you the most complete and
 elegant line of
FALL AND WINTER CLOTHING
Hats and Furnishing Goods,
 ever shown in Staunton. Everything that is new and
 up-to-date, you will find in our establishment. There is
 absolutely nothing missing. The finest of Olay Worsted,
 English Serges, Veeunas Thebets, Unfinished Worsteds,
 Moltons, Whipcords, Striped flannels, and last, but not
 least, the beautiful neat effects of Cassimeres can be found
 here in endless variety. We can fit you all, no matter
 how long and slim, how short and stout you are.
 To make your Children be admired there is but one
 place to buy them suits, that is ours. Just received a big
 line of 3-piece suits for Boys, age 8 to 16. They are
 beauties. Made with short pants and double breasted
 vests, and are the latest. A look will convince you that
 if you want right, if you want to be treated right, if you
 want to be right up-to-date, and if you want to save mon-
 ey, buy your Goods at the Clothiers who do what they
 promise.
WEINBERG CLOTHING CO.,
 5 S. Augusta St. Next to Aug. Nat. Bank.
STAUNTON, VA.

man to go back to Baltimore, because Barth had all the clothing trade in the area. Undaunted, Weinberg opened the Weinberg Clothing Company on South Augusta Street, where StellerOne now stands. Weinberg eventually married a sister of Barth and in 1911 the two stores were combined as Barth Weinberg and Company.¹⁹ In 1996, the great-grandson of Abraham Weinberg celebrated his Bar Mitzvah in Temple House of Israel.

Miss Fannie Strauss 1892-1973

Miss Fannie Strauss was, by all accounts, a remarkable woman. She went to college and graduate school at a time when few women did so, and never married. Though deaf, she taught math, German, Latin, and comparative literature at Mary Baldwin College. She drove around in a horse and buggy when everyone else drove automobiles; she wore the same style of dress for decade after decade. She drove



Miss Fannie Strauss

with her buggy and the horse (confusingly named Fannie Horse) until 1951. Miss Fannie (it was always “Miss Fannie”) couldn’t be bothered learning names; to her, all rabbis at Temple House of Israel were “Mr. Rabbi,” and all other people, including Temple Board members and her colleagues at Mary Baldwin, were uniformly addressed as “Child.”

However, Miss Fannie commanded absolute respect. She founded the temple’s religious school and taught in it for forty-five years. In 1973 the religious school wing (now the social hall) was named in her honor. She was treasurer of the temple from 1942 to 1973, during which time the congregation mysteriously never ran a deficit—Miss Fannie disliked red ink, and quietly made up any shortfalls out of her own funds. She also couldn’t stop teaching. She taught at Mary Baldwin College for forty-four years. She taught Biblical history in the religious school, and went around to area churches to educate their congregations about Judaism.

Stories about Miss Fannie live on, long after her death. One rabbi who had been here as a student rabbi, told how she always sat in the same pew—and if she didn’t like the sermon, she’d reach up and



ostentatiously turn off her hearing aid. No one in the congregation could miss it.²⁰ She was famous for her ability to write at the blackboard with her back to the class, and, though stone-deaf, whip around to scold the student who had whispered. But the students (who quickly learned not to fool around in class) also adored her—for the famous brownies she baked, for the enormous toy box she kept in her house, and for the buggy rides around Gypsy Hill Park.. Her portrait on our wall, and the hall named in her honor, are continuing reminders of this remarkable woman.

The Staunton Military Academy students

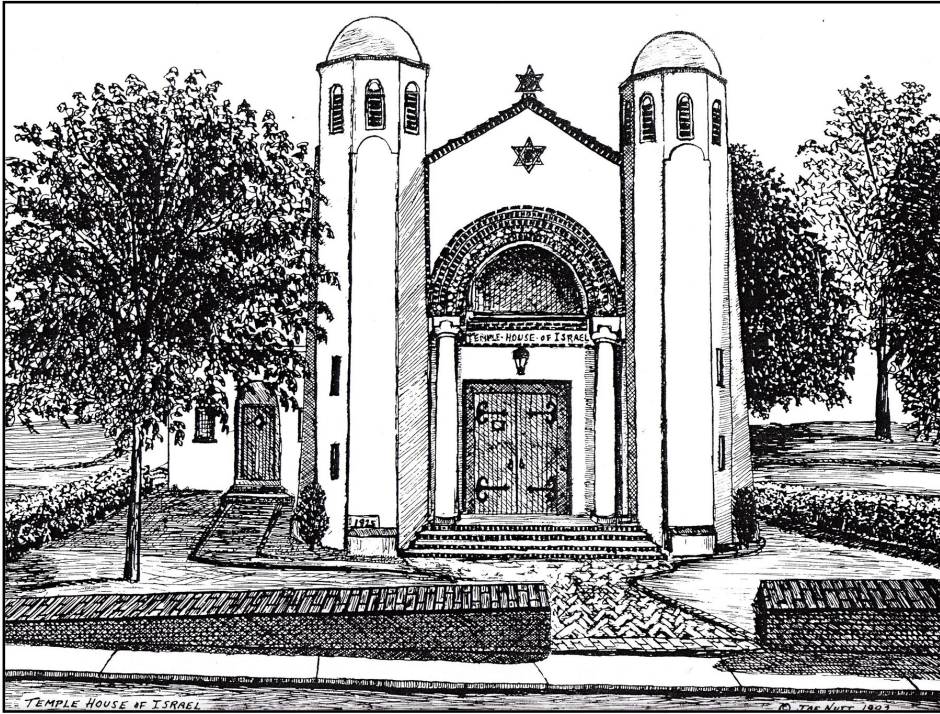
Cadets at Staunton Military Academy were required to attend services on Sunday mornings. In Judaism, the important services are Friday evening and Saturday mornings. Weekday services are short—about twenty minutes. To oblige the Jewish cadets, a member of the temple would go in on Sunday mornings and have services for the cadets and also conduct the religious school for children who attended. Since the services were so short, the boys would then have a good forty minutes to themselves before having to go back to SMA. There were rumors that a number of cadets declared themselves Jewish for the academic year to take advantage of this. Cadets at Augusta Military Academy and Fishburne Military Academy also came to services,



Artwork done by congregant Beryl Gutnick showing symbols of the temple.



Two interior views of the temple. The top photograph shows a close-up of the Ark.



Exterior views of the temple. The top drawing was done by Joe Nutt.





so on some Sunday mornings there might be twenty or thirty young men in uniform at the temple.²¹

In 2001, the temple celebrated its 125th anniversary. The tree of life quilt on a wall in the social hall was made by local textile artist Martha Degen, in honor of the occasion. The congregation is now 136 years old and still going strong.

Endnotes

¹ Deed of Purchase, Staunton City Clerk of Courts Office

² Minutes of the Congregation, 1 February 1885, Temple House of Israel (hereafter THOI) Archives.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Minutes of the congregation, p. 100, THOI Archives

⁵ personal communication, Anne Goldberg, March 2001

⁶ Minutes of the Congregation, 2 May 1886, p. 34, THOI Archives.

⁷ Minutes of the congregation, p. 64 THOI Archives

⁸ personal communication from Abe Kronsberg, grandson of Abraham Weinberg, May 1996

⁹ Deed of sale in Staunton City Clerk of Courts

¹⁰ Invoice from Charles Connick, 3 September 1925, from the Connick correspondence collection, Boston Public Library

¹¹ Original letter is in the collection of Connick correspondence at the Boston Public Library, Boston, MA

¹² Letter from T.J. Collins, 11 April 1925, THOI Archives

¹³ "Major Alexander Hart, CSA, and His Family", unpublished article by Cherry Bamberg, FAGS, 2012

¹⁴ Shapell Manuscript Foundation, accessed online <http://www.shapell.org/manuscript.aspx?169335>

¹⁵ Excerpt from the diaries of Major Alexander Hart, courtesy of the American Jewish Archives

¹⁶ Deed of Trust, Staunton City Clerk of Courts

¹⁷ Robert Rosen, *The Jewish Confederates*, (Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 2000) ; photo online Find a Grave Memorial #11337360

¹⁸ Oral history of Pearl Klotz, daughter of Jacob, recorded 5 June 2001, THOI Archives

¹⁹ Fannie Barth Strauss, "The Jewish Community in Staunton," *The Augusta Historical Bulletin*, Fall 1972).

²⁰ Oral History, Rabbi Donald Berlin, letter sent in 2001, THOI archives.

²¹ Oral history of Sara Lee Margolis, April 2001, THOI Archives



A Guide to the Staunton (Va.) Chancery Causes, 1808-1951 (bulk 1871-1933) Chancery Records Index: Staunton (Va.) Chancery Causes, 1808-001-1951-001

A Collection in
the Library of Virginia

By Greg Crawford (local records manager,
Library of Virginia) and staff

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Editor's Note: In the summer of 2011, the Library of Virginia local records management staff, gave a presentation at the Staunton Public Library about the preservation and posting on the World Wide Web of courthouse records from Staunton and Augusta County. In their presentation they highlighted some of the more interesting cases. What follows is a copy of that presentation for the Staunton, Va. records. As documents are scanned, they will be posted on the Library of Virginia's website. You can keep up with the progress by going to http://www.virginiamemory.com/blogs/out_of_the_box/2012/02/03/not-in-my-backyard-2/.

Access Restrictions There are no restrictions; **Use Restrictions** Patrons are to use digital images of Staunton (Va.) Chancery Causes found on the Chancery Records Index available electronically at the website of the Library of Virginia.

Preferred Citation Staunton (Va.) Chancery Causes, 1808-1951 (bulk 1871-1933). (Cite style of suit and chancery index no.). Local Government Records Collection, StauntonCourt Records. The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia.

Acquisition Information Digital images were generated by Crowley Micrographics through the Library of Virginia's Circuit Court Records



Preservation Program.

Descriptive Summary

Repository: The Library of Virginia

Chancery Records Index: Staunton (Va.) Chancery Causes, 1859-001-1925-001

Title: Staunton (Va.) Chancery Causes, 1808-1951 (bulk 1871-1933)

Location: Library of Virginia

Physical Characteristics: Digital images

Language: English

Collector: Staunton (Va.) Circuit Court

Scope and Content

Staunton (Va.) Chancery Causes, 1808-1951 (bulk 1871-1933), are indexed into the Chancery Records Index. Cases are identified by style of suit consisting of plaintiff and defendant names. Surnames of others involved in a suit, including secondary plaintiffs and defendants, witnesses, deponents and affiants, and family members with surnames different from the plaintiff or defendant are indexed. Chancery causes often involved the following: divisions of estates or land, disputes over wills, divorces, debt, and business disputes. Predominant documents found in chancery causes include bills (plaintiff's complaint), answers (defendant's response), decrees (court's decision), depositions, affidavits, correspondence, lists of heirs, deeds, wills, slave records, business records or vital statistics, among other items. Plats, if present, are noted, as are wills from localities with an incomplete record of wills or localities other than the one being indexed.

Chancery cases are useful when researching local history, genealogical information, and land or estate divisions. They are a valuable source of local, state, social, and legal history and serve as a primary source for understanding a locality's history.

Historical Information

Chancery Causes are cases of equity. According to Black's Law Dictionary they are "administered according to fairness as contrasted with the strictly formulated rules of common law." A judge, not a jury, determines the outcome of the case.

The city of Staunton, in Augusta County, was named, according to tradition, for Rebecca Staunton, wife of Sir William Gooch, lieutenant governor of Virginia from 1727 to 1749. Staunton was laid out in 1748



at the site of the Augusta County courthouse and was established as a town in 1761. It was incorporated as a town in 1801 and as a city in 1871.

Arrangement

Organized by case, of which each is assigned a unique index number comprised of the latest year found in case and a sequentially increasing 3-digit number assigned by the processor as cases for that year are found. Arranged chronologically.

Arrangement of documents within each folder are as follows: Bill, Answer, and Final Decree (if found.)

Adjunct Descriptive Data

Related Material

Additional Staunton Court Records can be found on microfilm at The Library of Virginia. See *A Guide to Virginia County and City Records on Microfilm*

See the Chancery Records Index found on the Library of Virginia web site for the chancery records of other Virginia localities.

Corporate Names:

Staunton (Va.) Circuit Court.

Subjects:

African Americans—History.

Business enterprises—Virginia—Staunton.

Debt—Virginia—Staunton.

Divorce suits—Virginia—Staunton.

Estates (Law)—Virginia—Staunton.

Equity—Virginia—Staunton.

Land subdivision—Virginia—Staunton.

Geographical Names:

Staunton (Va.)—History.

Staunton (Va.)—Genealogy.

Genre and Form Terms:

Chancery causes—Virginia—Staunton.

Deeds—Virginia—Staunton.

Judicial records—Virginia—Staunton.

Land records—Virginia—Staunton.

Local government records—Virginia—Staunton.

Plats—Virginia—Staunton.

Wills—Virginia—Staunton.



Selected Chancery Causes of Interest

- 1875-005 Town of Lexington vs. Valley Railroad Company etc: Town invested in the railroad on the condition it would be built quickly and come near the town. Now Lexington officials are afraid that the railroad is not holding to the conditions of the investment.

- 1886-009 City of Staunton vs. John M. Carroll: Carroll had been city treasurer for years but was removed from office in 1885. He owes the city around \$10,000 and the city is suing to have his property sold to settle the debt.

- 1898-001 Trustees of Fairview Cemetery etc vs. Charles L. Brock: Brock was treasurer and as such responsible for selling grave plots and keeping track of the cemetery's finances. He kept the finances in a disorderly fashion and after his removal from the board, the new trustees allege that he owes money to the cemetery. Various depositions as to his financial management style and troubles with upkeep in the cemetery. Exhibits include lists of plot owners.

- 1901-018 Alexander Campbell Chewning vs Mary Lee Chewning: Divorce and child custody case. Copious depositions as to the bad character and reputation of the father including accusations that he was a wanderer, a criminal, had no fixed address, was a peddler, was not a gentleman, did nothing for a living, did not pay his bills, did not support his family, was considered notorious, was an imposter, was a tramp, was disagreeable with his family and neighbors, used aliases, her family never wanted her to marry him, he was banned from in-laws' house after he got his mother-in-law to sign a contract that turned out to be signing over all her property to him, once he kidnapped his children and took them out west where he had them participate in some money-raising scheme. Also included are letters to the court from his fourteen and seventeen-year-old children declaring that they would not live with him, they wanted nothing to do with him, and that they chose to remain with their mother.

- 1901-021 Mary Baldwin Seminary vs. City of Staunton: City has begun to tax city lots that belong to the school after years of not taxing them. School claims the lots were deeded to the school and rented out to support their educational mission and that therefore according to both state law and Staunton city regulations, they are tax exempt. Mary Baldwin prevailed both in the suit and on appeal.

- 1906-022 Trustees of Augusta Street Methodist Episcopal Church vs. Moses Lake, etc: Fight between trustees and pastor over church finances and authority over money. Trustees claim that the pastor has

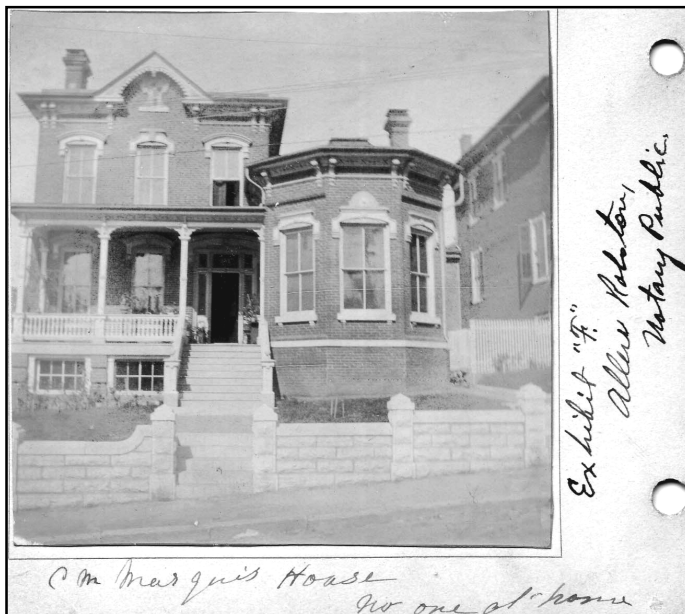
seized control of the finances and is doing whatever he wishes, making himself obnoxious, and splitting the congregation. Pastor contends that the trustees are former trustees. Suit dismissed because the issues at hand had been settled by a congregation vote.

- 1908-008 W. H. Garman vs. Aaron H. Adler etc: Proprietor of the Beverley Hotel puts a lien on two travelling cases of umbrellas and umbrella parts to satisfy Adler's hotel bill debt. Cases were eventually sold by the sheriff to pay the debt.

- 1917-002 Executor of Caroline M. Marquis vs. Legatees of Caroline M. Marquis: Suit contains lots of information about her extensive properties in Staunton and a list of her furniture. Also includes photographs of her, her family members, and interiors and exteriors of buildings she either owned or had an interest in, including the Marquis Memorial Chapel.



This photograph was part of the exhibit evidence in the 1917 case of Executor of Caroline M. Marquis vs. Legatees of Caroline M. Marquis. The photograph was presented as an interior of a building she owned.



These two photographs were also part of the exhibit evidence in the 1917 case of *Executor of Caroline M. Marquis vs. Legatees of Caroline M. Marquis*.



These two photographs were part of the exhibit evidence in the divorce case 1924-002 Edna Wright vs. Frank Wright. The photographs feature Mr. Wright kissing and hugging someone who is not Mrs. Wright but is in fact Mrs. Duffey.

- 1918-003 Executor of Charlotte Straith vs. Legatees of Charlotte Straith: Suit contains lots of information about her properties including a house called Oakenwold and a list of silverplate owned. Extensive bills for house construction and decoration indicate building and decorating trends and methods of the time period.

- 1924-002 Edna Wright vs. Frank Wright: Divorce case that includes as an exhibit photographs that feature Mr. Wright kissing and hugging someone who is not Mrs. Wright but is in fact Mrs. Duffey.



A Guide to the Staunton (Va.) Commonwealth Causes and Criminal Papers, 1807-1919

Barcode numbers: 1184512-1184541

A Collection in the Library of Virginia

Processed by Sarah Nerney

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Access Restrictions There are no restrictions. **Use Restrictions** For Commonwealth Causes, use microfilm, Staunton (Va.) Reels 16-46.

Preferred Citation Staunton (Va.) Commonwealth Causes and Criminal Papers, 1807-1919. Local government records collection, Staunton (City) Court Records. The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia 23219.

Acquisition Information These items came to the Library of Virginia in transfers of court papers from Staunton under the accession number 43238. The microfilm was generated by Backstage Library Works through the Library of Virginia's Circuit Court Records Preservation Program.

Descriptive Summary

Repository: The Library of Virginia Barcode numbers: 1184512-1184541

Title: Staunton (Va.) Commonwealth Causes and Criminal Papers, 1807-1919

Location: Library of Virginia

Physical Characteristics: 10 cu. ft. (30 boxes)

Language: English

Collector: Staunton (Va.) Circuit Court

Scope and Content

Staunton (Va.) Commonwealth Causes and Criminal Papers, 1807-1919, are criminal court cases and other criminal papers that consist primarily of warrants, summons, subpoenas, indictments, recognizances, and verdicts handed down by grand juries and other



legal authorities in order to prosecute individuals who violated the penal code. These offenses ranged in severity from murder, rape, assault and battery, and larceny to tax evasion, slander, liquor law violations, prostitution, and contempt of court. Criminal offenders and victims who appear in cases prior to the abolition of slavery in Virginia in 1865 included both free and enslaved persons.

Warrants were issued by grand juries, judges, and justices of the peace directing law enforcement officials to either arrest and imprison a person suspected of having committed a crime or to cause an individual to appear in court to answer accusations made against them. Peace warrants directing an offender to keep the peace of the Commonwealth or to restrain from any violent acts are commonly found in assault and battery cases.

Summonses were used to call a suspected person to appear in court. A summons could also be issued to direct witnesses or victims to come before the court in order to provide evidence or information deemed pertinent to a case. Subpoenas were also used to order witnesses to court to give evidence.

An indictment is the official, written description of the crime that an accused individual is suspected of committing, which is approved by a grand jury and presented to a court in order to begin legal proceedings. Due to this process, indictments are often referred to as presentments.

Verdicts are the formal pronouncements made by juries on issues submitted to them by a judge or other law enforcement official. In the case of a guilty verdict, a judge will sentence the offender. Sentences may include a fine, corporal punishment, and/or imprisonment.

Recognizances were bonds or obligations made in court by which a person promised to do a certain thing such as keep the peace or to appear when called. They are common in assault and battery cases. Often they functioned as a bail bond that guaranteed an unjailed criminal defendant's return for a court date.

Overseers of the Poor causes consist of prosecutions for bastardy or summons to show cause why a child should not be bound out as an apprentice or why an apprenticeship bond should not be broken.

Certificates of justice were notices sent by the jailer that he had committed a certain person or persons to the jail to await trial or other court action.



Historical Information

The city of Staunton is located in Augusta County. Established as a town in 1761, it was incorporated as a town in 1801 and as a city in 1871. It is one of Virginia's independent cities and therefore functions administratively separately from the county in which it is located.

Arrangement

Arranged by ended court date then alphabetically by defendant surname.

Corporate Names: Staunton (Va.) Circuit Court.

Subjects:

African Americans — Virginia — Staunton.

Apprentices — Virginia — Staunton.

Assault and battery — Virginia — Staunton.

Contempt of court — Virginia — Staunton.

Crime — Virginia — Staunton.

Criminals — Virginia — Staunton.

Forgery — Virginia — Staunton.

Illegitimacy — Virginia — Staunton.

Larceny — Virginia — Staunton.

Libel and slander — Virginia — Staunton.

Liquor laws — Virginia — Staunton.

Murder — Virginia — Staunton.

Prostitution — Virginia — Staunton.

Rape — Virginia — Staunton.

Slaveholders — Virginia — Staunton.

Slaves — Virginia — Staunton.

Tax evasion. — Virginia — Staunton.

Geographical Names:

Staunton (Va.) — History.

Genre and Form Terms:

Indictments — Virginia — Staunton.

Local government records — Virginia — Staunton.

Subpoenas — Virginia — Staunton.

Summons — Virginia — Staunton.

Verdicts — Virginia — Staunton.

Warrants — Virginia — Staunton.

Added Entry - Corporate Name:

Staunton (Va.) Corporation Court.

Staunton (Va.) Hustings Court.



Commonwealth Causes of Interest

- 1808 September, Abraham: slave going at large and hiring himself out
- 1812 March, Isaac Collett: printing a false and scandalous libel
- 1812 March, John G. Flack: uttering opprobrious words to a justice of the peace
- 1814 March, David Phillips: fornication with a female slave
- 1817 November, Charles Bankhead: sending a challenge to fight a duel
- 1818 March, Washington Doake: refuse to help constable take a slave to the whipping post
- 1820 November, Sally Bush, free negro: being at an unlawful meeting with slaves
- 1823 August, Lavinia Hewlett and others: for not registering as free negroes
- 1828 May, William Carroll Sr.: habitual intoxication, abuse of his family and obscene language
- 1829 November, many free negroes: for not registering as free negroes
- 1833 July, John H. Ast: public nuisance: slaughterhouse
- 1837 April, Erasmus Stribling, clerk of court: permit his slaves to trade as free persons
- 1843 February, Harman J. Lushbaugh: obscene graffiti
- 1849 September, Eli Smith, free negro: use provoking language to a white man
- 1857 July, Thomas O'Connell and wife: permit unlawful assembly of slaves, trade with slaves, sell liquor to slaves
- 1860 February, Samuel Cooper: publicly exposing his private parts
- 1860 July, Michael Carmody: playing at bagatelle
- 1860 July, James Edwards: assemble with negroes in the night time
- 1860 July, Howard Grove and Margaret Sinclair: lewd and lascivious cohabitation
- 1863 June, Bridget McCarty alias Bolin: received goods stolen from Confederate States government
- 1863 December, George Pforr: attempted rape of his daughter
- 1868 February, Thomas Harris: rape of multiple children under twelve years of age
- 1882 March, Margaret alias Mag Lewis: keep house of ill fame



- 1882 May, Love Smith: buggery with a mare
- 1884 September, Crawford and Lalley: sell liquor on an election day
- 1884 December, David Kayser: public nuisance: backhouse and privy
- 1886 February, John Harris: seduction under promise of marriage
- 1887 July, Demetta alias Doctor alias Duretta Liverpool: seduction under promise of marriage
- 1889 March, Nettie Mays alias Fox: extortion and blackmail
- 1893 December, W. L. Oliver: exhibit semi-nude photograph in his window
- 1894 March, Preston Moon: seduction
- 1899 March, John T. Todd: abduction with the intent to deitem
- 1901 January, N. C. Watts, jailer: permitting the escape of a prisoner from the county jail
- 1901 September, Horace Miller: house burning
- 1906 February, Kemp Howdyshell: escape from jail
- 1906 May, David M. Kyle: murder
- 1908 September, Canary Morris: possession of cocaine with the intent to sell; selling cocaine
- 1908 October, Albert Spiers: attempted murder
- 1909 July, Walter D. Hoge: illegal voting
- 1916 December, Edward Bryant: buggery with a child
- 1917 September, John H. Johnson: bigamy



Searching for the Man Behind the Signature: A.D. Tribbett

By Angela L. Walthall

Angela L. Walthall recently graduated from James Madison University in May 2012 with her M.A. in history, with a concentration in public history. During the spring semester of 2012, she worked as a Hamrick intern for the Augusta County Historical Society, focusing on two main projects. This paper resulted from her first assignment; to process an archival collection of receipts, promissory notes, and other business documents that belonged to Andrew Davidson Tribbett in the late nineteenth century. Walthall spent a considerable amount of her semester searching for further information about the “man behind the signature.”

For most residents of Augusta County, it is common knowledge that mills played an important role in local history. Since the late eighteenth century, the grain-based agrarian economy supported the rise of the county's two leading industries, milling and distilling. Wheat and corn were grown in significant quantities until the mid-twentieth century. People moving to the frontier of Virginia in the early eighteenth century quickly realized the comfortable income that could be earned by milling, and the profession swiftly became the leading industry in the area. For more than two hundred years, the water-powered grain mills of Augusta County contributed to the wealth, growth, and national recognition of the Shenandoah Valley. In fact, it was not until the mid-twentieth century that the successful industry of milling ceased as agricultural production shifted to beef, poultry, and hay.

Though many of the mills that dotted the countryside of Augusta County have been torn down or left in disrepair since then, it is important to remember how the industry almost immediately made the Shenandoah Valley valuable to the entire nation. For example, during the American Revolution, Shenandoah Valley residents sent



barrels of flour to the people of Boston, who had lost access to trade in the Boston Harbor. During the California Gold Rush of 1849, it was bread made from grain of the Shenandoah Valley that kept forty-niners strong on the other side of the country. Additionally, during the Civil War, the region became known as “the breadbasket of the Confederacy,” which is one reason why it was so heavily targeted by the Union Army. “The Burning” under U.S. General Philip Sheridan targeted the grain production of the Shenandoah Valley. The resulting scorched earth devastation helped win President Abraham Lincoln’s re-election and end the Civil War.¹

On a local level, the earliest mills served as small town centers. After the construction of a new mill, a church, blacksmith shop, post office, and other community dwellings often followed. The mill also turned into a gathering place for farmers waiting for their crops to be processed. Furthermore, the miller was often a respected, educated man in the community, which typically led to his business functioning as a local bank for farmers who needed to borrow money.² As literate, efficient businessmen, millers tended to keep copious records in reference to their daily transactions. If those documents survived, they left behind various clues to information about their lives for future generations. A small collection of such documents, including receipts, promissory notes, and business letters, donated to the Augusta County Historical Society library in January 2012, introduced one of these millers: Andrew Davidson Tribbett. Beginning with a name that was so often signed in the documents, a general time period, and names of mills that the collection provided, the author was able to collect further information about the life of an average yet important citizen of Augusta County in the late nineteenth century.

The Tribbett name does not trace its origins to Augusta County, nor did A. D. Tribbett. leave any sons to carry the name forward; therefore, it may not be immediately recognizable to local history enthusiasts. John Tribbett, the grandfather of Andrew Davidson, was a man of Scotch-Irish descent who moved from Pennsylvania to “Cullystown” (probably Collierstown) in Rockbridge County, Virginia, in the early nineteenth century. He and his wife, Lizzie Entsminger, bore three children: William Andrew. and John. John married Rebecca Young Clarke and together they became the proud parents of Andrew Davidson Tribbett on December 7, 1836, in Collierstown.³

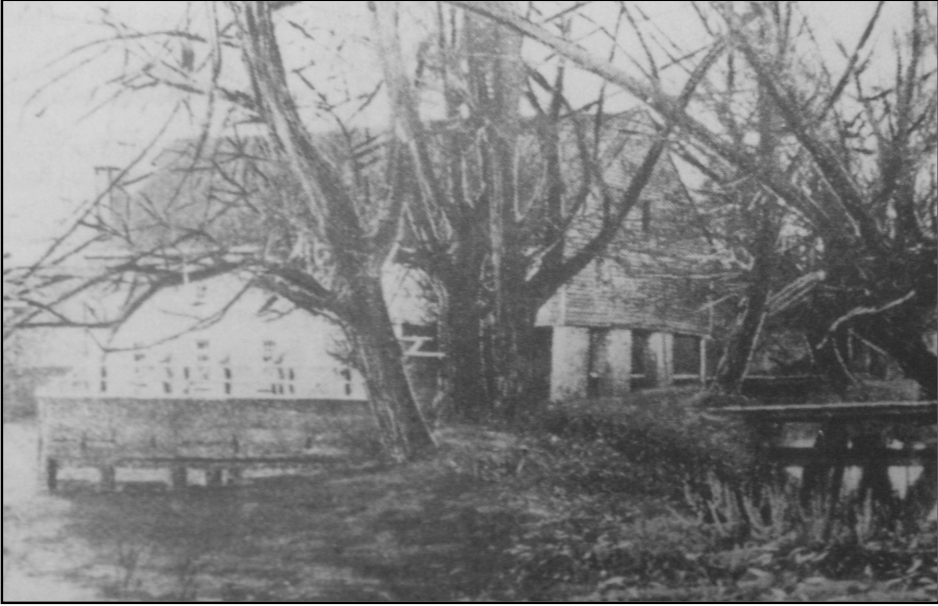


There was not much information uncovered about Tribbett's childhood in Rockbridge County. However, several sources reference his service as a Confederate soldier during the Civil War. Simply listed as a "laborer" living in the Kerr's Creek District of Rockbridge County in the 1860 census at the dawn of the war, Tribbett enlisted at Lexington, Virginia as a private on July 15, 1861. Various Civil War soldier records on Ancestry.com's website, *Henry Hardesty's 1885 Historical and Geographical Encyclopedia*, and Lowell Reidenbaugh's comprehensive regiment history all state that Tribbett served in the 27th Virginia Infantry, in the second Company H, also known as the "Rockbridge Rifles," a part of Stonewall Jackson's Brigade. According to Reidenbaugh, the Rockbridge Rifles was a prestigious group that was originally organized in 1859 following the raid on Harper's Ferry, and quickly became the pride of Lexington. After the First Battle of Bull Run, and shortly after Tribbett joined the company in July 1861, the Rockbridge Rifles joined the 27th Virginia Infantry as the second Company H. The Virginia 27th was the smallest regiment in Stonewall Jackson's Brigade for the duration of the war, with roughly 1,200 farmers and laborers enlisted.⁴ Nonetheless, the efforts of the regiment—and the Rockbridge Rifles in particular—did not go unnoticed. On April 17, 1862, a journalist writing for the *Lexington Gazette* declared:

If there is any company of Virginia's brave troops, which deserves to be placed on the same platform with Morgan's Rifles of the old Revolution, it is the Rockbridge Rifles....this brave company have been sent wherever firm nerves, strong hands and sharp shooting have been most needed.

They have nobly sustained the reputation of the Valley Riflemen, who gained immortal renown under Morgan on many a hard-fought field...⁵

Andrew D. Tribbett was active with his company for the majority of the war, and was promoted to 3rd Corporal in 1864. From December 15-31, 1861 he was listed as absent due to illness, and was kept in the Winchester Hospital until January 10, 1862. On December 20, 1862, Tribbett left the army as a deserter, but willingly returned again to his Company on February 19, 1863. His final short absence from the war came when he was on leave from February 14-28, 1864. Despite these intermittent absences, though, Tribbett remained a member of the Stonewall Brigade throughout the war, and he "never missed a fight from Chancellorsville to surrender."⁶



Folly Mills circa 1892, (From Mills of Augusta County by Downs, Downs, and Sorrells)

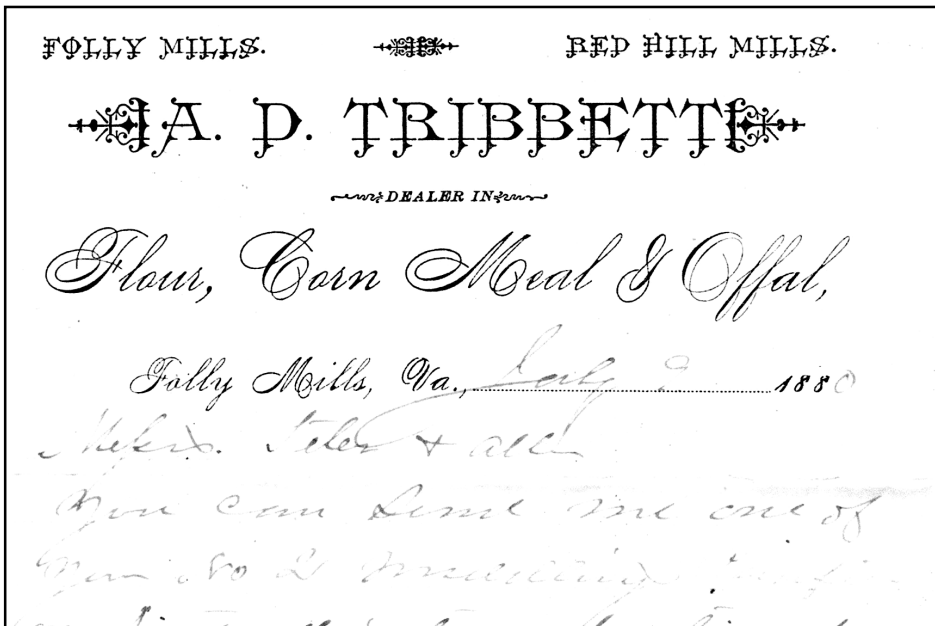
Following the war, Tribbett moved to Augusta County in 1868, and was recorded to be living with the Collins family in the Riverheads District, where he began to work as a miller. On October 28, 1871, Presbyterian clergyman Reverend Samuel Brown officiated over the marriage of Tribbett to Mary Eve Hall. Mrs. Tribbett was born in September 1844 near Middlebrook, Augusta County, to Robert C. and Sadie (Boserman) Hall. In their time together, the couple bore five children, all daughters, four of whom lived to adulthood: Birdie Cochran (b. April 1872/3), Nora Davidson (June 1874-October 1874), Minnie Brook (b. October 1876), Cordelia Blanche (b. April 1881/2), and Lottie B. (b. April 1886).⁷

It is the year of their marriage that Andrew Tribbett's many associations with the mills of Augusta County began to surface. Though it is unclear where the newlyweds lived from 1871 to 1873, various sources imply that Tribbett was given charge of Folly Mills in 1871, which was located three miles south of Staunton on Route 11. Folly Mills was the property of Colonel Cochran's wife, and Tribbett ran it for her for at least fifteen years, making a comfortable living for his family and reputable name for himself. Though he and his wife did purchase their own property, and eventually their own mills,



Tribbett's postal address and stationery referred customers to communicate with him at Folly.

On July 9, 1873, Andrew and Mary Tribbett purchased a house just south of Staunton on Paul Street from a Mr. Fisher for \$900. The family lived there while Tribbett ran Folly Mills for Mrs. Cochran, and once they had saved enough money, they used their savings and their current home to purchase a mill of their own. There are two deeds that reference this transaction which date to May 2, 1878, between A.D. and M.E. Tribbett and Thornton G. Stout. In the first, Stout paid the Tribbetts for their house and property on Paul Street. The second deed states that the Tribbetts purchased Trinity Point Mills from Stout for \$4,700, which was paid in this manner: “\$800 in price and value of a house and lot” and four yearly installments of \$975 plus interest. The deed also listed R.H. Hall as the surety, which may be referring to Mary Tribbett’s father or brother. Trinity Point Mills, which was located on the Middle River in Augusta County’s Pastures District, was



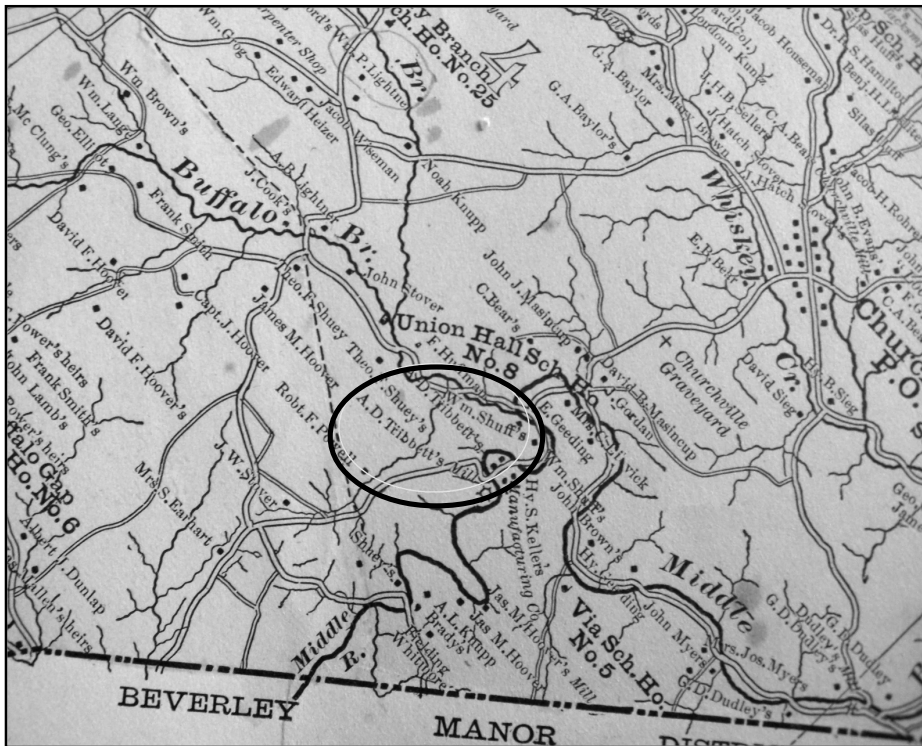
A sheet from Tribbett's personalized stationery. According to Henry Hardesty, Trinity Point Mills was "attached to Rock Hill Mills, which he runs and owns." It is not clear whether Hardesty meant that Tribbett owned both mills or if Red Hill Mills was another name for Trinity Point, and other references to Red Hill Mills have not been found at this point.





described as “consisting of a flouring mill, saw mill, certain water rights and two parcels of land together containing about fifty acres.” In 1885, it was recorded that Tribbett was producing between 3,600-4,000 barrels of flour each year.⁸

A third mill that Andrew Davidson Tribbett’s name is often associated with is Valley Mills, which was located where Route 254 crosses the Middle River, about five and a half miles west of Staunton. According to a deed book in the Augusta County Courthouse, in April 1885 Tribbett purchased Valley Mills from the commissioner of purchase, P. H. Baylor, for \$4,850; \$176 paid in cash with an agreement that Tribbett would pay \$1,557.92 once a year for three years. The surety for the purchase, William F. Summerson, was substituted as the purchaser on June 8, 1885. The reasoning for this change is



Detail from a Jedediah Hotchkiss map found in Historical Atlas of Augusta County, Virginia, 1885. Trinity Point Mills was also referred to as “A. D. Tribbett’s Mill” by several sources, which is shown on this map in the Pastures District on the Middle River, close to the border of the Beverley Manor District. Tribbett’s house can also be seen adjacent to his mill.



Trinity Point Mills, right, located on the Middle River on Route 833, approximately one mile north of the intersection with 720. Trinity Point Mills, below, shortly before it was torn down. From Mills of Augusta County.



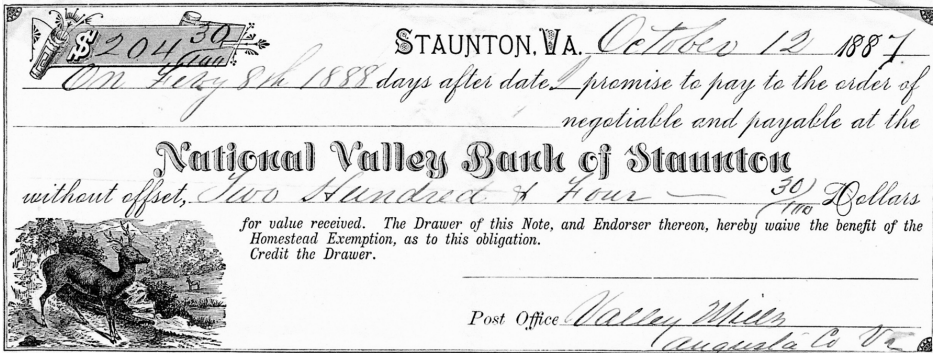


unclear, and though there are no records uncovered as of yet in regard to how and when ownership of Valley Mills was passed back to Tribbett, his debt to Summerson must have been resolved. Another deed that dates to July 13, 1889, states that Tribbett sold Valley Mill to W. E. Mays. The Works Progress Administration's inventory of historic houses also refers to Valley Mills as the A. Philip Parmer (Palmer) Place, and states that it once served as the town post office, and in its early history "boasted of a good store, wagon shop, and a saw and grain mill." A number of sources associate Tribbett with the post office at Valley Mills, indicating that it served as such during his ownership in the late 1880s.⁹

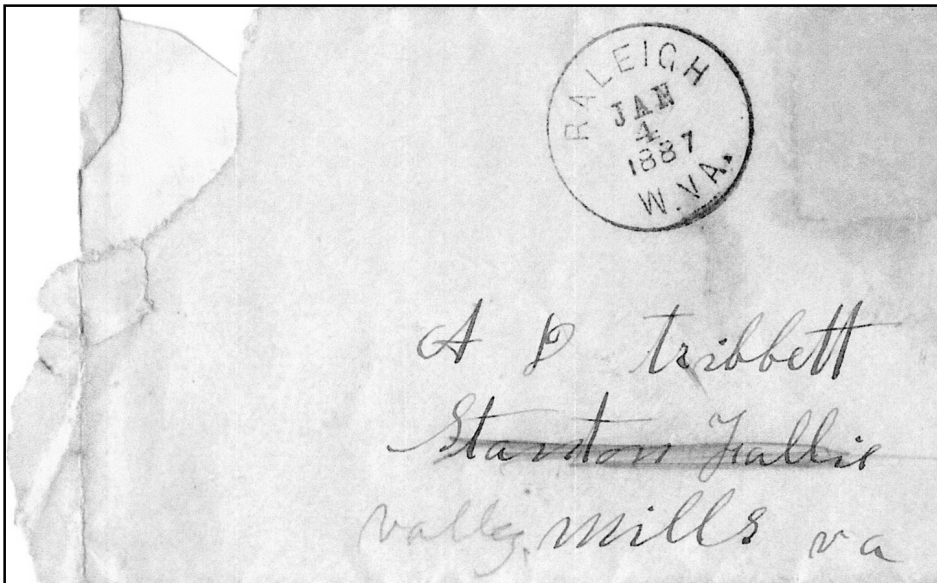
Shortly after selling Valley Mills, Tribbett also sold Trinity Point on



Valley Mills, located where Rt. 254 crosses the Middle River, had been torn down by the 1960s. From Mills of Augusta County.



A promissory note dated October 12, 1887, designated Valley Mills as the post office. This note confirms that Tribbett was involved in the ownership of Valley Mills during his tenure as the postmaster (A.D. Tribbett Business Papers, Augusta County Historical Society)



This envelope that accompanied a letter mailed to Tribbett in January 1887 from Robert W. in Raleigh County West Virginia, requesting that Tribbett send a letter describing what he sells: "flower, corn meal...". "Stanton Follie" is crossed out and replaced with "Valley Mills," indicating a change in Tribbett's post office address. (A.D. Tribbett Business Papers, Augusta County Historical Society)

July 8, 1892, to J.C. Cochran. However, the 1900 census states that Tribbett was renting in the Pastures District, which implies that he and his family continued to live in his home at the Trinity Point Mills as renters. His obituary also states that he died "at his home at Trinity Point Mills" in 1903, which supports that idea.¹⁰ While records have yet to be discovered in reference to these changes, it is possible to conclude that Tribbett ceased running Folly Mills in 1885 or shortly after, and sought to own and run Valley Mills in its place (The change in his post office address supports that idea; in 1885 Henry Hardesty states it is Folly Mills, while the note below is addressed to Valley Mills, with "Follie" scratched out, in 1887). However, the financial burden may have been higher than the rewards, leading the Tribbetts to sell Valley Mills in 1889, and Trinity Point Mills shortly thereafter. Also worthy of consideration in regard to Tribbett's apparent financial troubles are the numerous recessions that plagued Americans during the years leading

P. N. POWELL,
Formerly of Powell & Blackley. }

Special Attention paid to Flour, Grain and Seeds. }

{ J. W. BRYAN,
{ Late with J. A. Hamrick & Co.

Staunton, Va., June 16th 1870

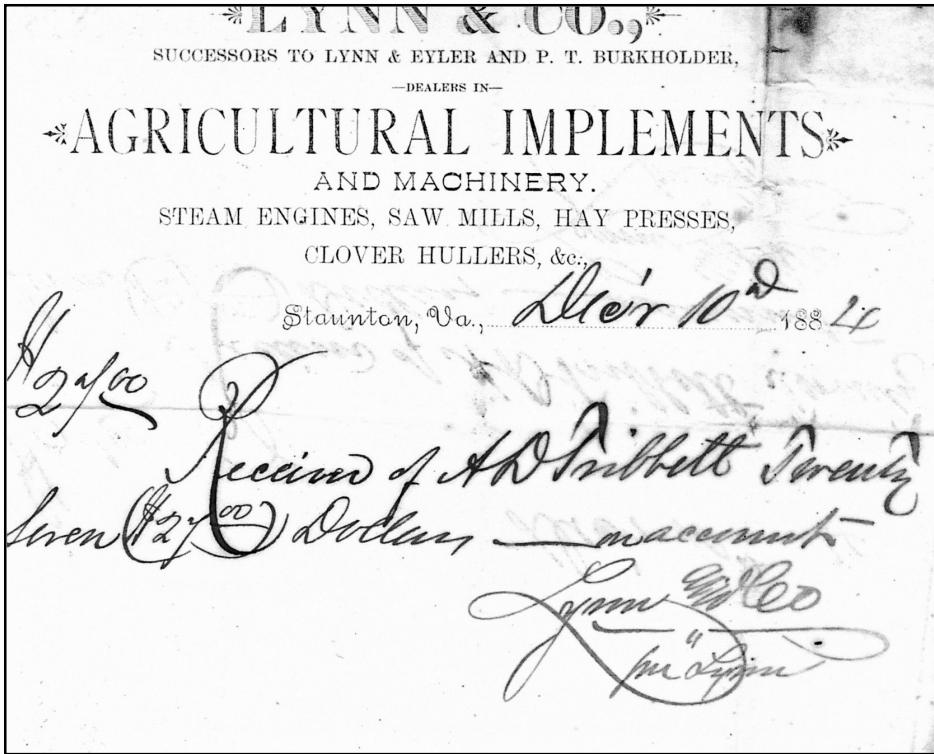
Mr. A. W. Tribbett

Powell & Bryan,

GROCERS, PRODUCE DEALERS AND COMMISSION MERCHANTS,
No. 16 North Augusta Street.

June	16	By 22 1/4 H offatts	43.5		16.40
June	2	" 28 1/2 " "	95		24.02
"	"	vt			
May	1	By Cash		13.22	
"	"	2 Barrells conckm.		1.10	
		Powell & Blackley note	28.24		
Interest		from April 22 1870 to June 16 1870	3.60		
			45.44		
			43.42		
		Balance due 1870		1.87	

Receipt for purchase by Tribbett from Powell and Bryan: Grocers, Produce Dealers, and Commission Merchants, June 16, 1870. (A.D. Tribbett Business Papers, Augusta County Historical Society)

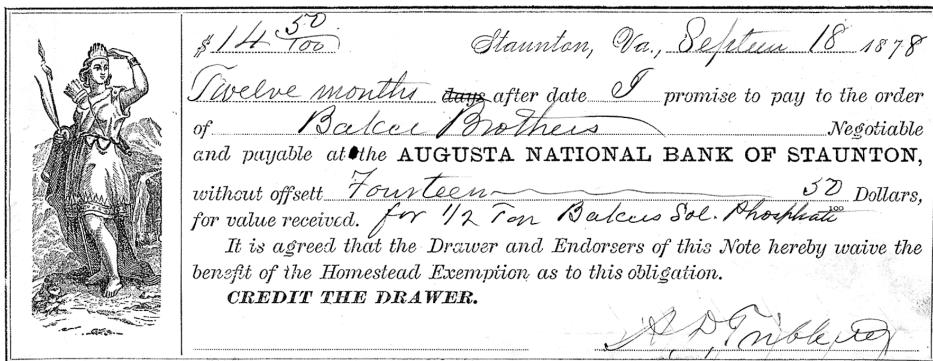


Receipt for payment by Tribbett to Lynn and Company: Dealers in Agricultural Implements and Machinery, December 10, 1884. (A.D. Tribbett Business Papers, Augusta County Historical Society)

up to the twentieth century. Additionally, it could also be possible that Andrew Tribbett was experiencing health problems as he neared the age of sixty, encouraging him to lighten his load.

There are roughly seventy documents in the collection that indicate several things about Andrew Davidson Tribbett. For example, it was previously mentioned that millers were respected, educated members of the community, and these documents suggest that Tribbett was no exception. Not only was he literate, he had fairly good handwriting and was skillful with numbers. Furthermore, he valued education for his daughters. A receipt dated March 4, 1898, records four dollars that he paid to the Mary Baldwin Seminary to allow his daughter Blanche to attend the 1897-1898 session. Unfortunately, records housed at Mary Baldwin College could not yield more information.

The collection also provides insight into the many acquaintances he communicated with in Staunton and around Augusta County



A promissory note stating that Tribbett will pay \$14.50 to the Baker Brothers "for 1/2 ton Bakers Sol. Phosphate," in association with the Augusta National Bank of Staunton, September 18, 1878. (A.D. Tribbett Business Papers, Augusta County Historical Society)

in regard to business and other financial transactions. Grocers and grain buyers he negotiated with included Powell and Bryan at 16 North Augusta Street, Dettor & Company at 107 South Augusta Street, John W. Todd on Middlebrook Avenue, J.H. Blackley at 27 Middlebrook Avenue, and Baker and Brown at 7 & 11 Middlebrook Avenue. A retailer of agricultural implements and machinery that Tribbett often called upon was Lynn & Company at 106 Greenville Avenue, and hardware retailers he visited were Frank Alexander & Company at 15 South Augusta Street and Hugh M. McIlhany across from the courthouse. Also, while early millers in Augusta County acted as local bankers, by the time Tribbett was an operating business, both the Augusta National Bank and National Valley Bank of Staunton were well established, and he received and provided loans through each of them.¹¹

Andrew Tribbett died suddenly at Trinity Point Mills on July 20, 1903. Though the cause of death is unidentified, it is not unreasonable to imagine that it was work related, which reminds one of how dangerous life could be as a miller at the turn of the century. Despite his apparent success in the 1870s and mid-1880s, at the time of his death Tribbett's estate only amounted to \$213.35, which is equivalent to around \$5,000 today. As can be seen in his probate inventory below, he owned a considerable amount of farming implements and livestock.



Mr Tribbett Greenville Apr 20/71
you will please let Mr.
Doyle have one Barrel Flour & I will
settle with you for the same.
J. W. Vines

The document in the Tribbett collection provides an insight into the less formal transactions Tribbett engaged in. This note, dated April 20, 1871, is a request from J.W. Vines to Tribbett to "let Mr. Doyle have one barrel flour and I will settle with you for the same." (A.D. Tribbett Business Papers, Augusta County Historical Society)

Andrew Tribbetts Probate Inventory

Will Book 59, pg. 41, Augusta County Courthouse:

Inventory and appraisal of the personal estate of A. D. Tribbett,
dec. July 20, 1903, viz.

- 1 Dayton Wagon \$24.00
- 1 Buckboard with top \$15.00
- 1 cultivator \$1.50
- 1 set 2 horse harness \$5.00
- 1 set buggy harness \$5.00
- 1 saddle \$1.50
- 1 2 horse wagon \$10.00
- 2 wheelbarrows \$.50
- 2 bag trucks \$1.50
- 1 cross cut saw \$.75
- 1 hand saw \$.25
- 1 platform scales \$6.00
- 1 Krout barrel \$.25
- 1 oil tank, measures and yank \$1.00
- 2 cut off saws and table \$1.50
- 2 scoops \$.50
- 1 soldering coper and pot \$.10
- 1 writing desk and bookcase \$1.50
- 1 Bedstead and bedding in mill \$.50
- 1 iron kettle \$1.25
- 1 large table and bench \$.50
- 1 meat tub \$.25
- 1 lot empty barrels \$3.00
- 1 barrel cider \$2.50
- 1 harrow 2 plows and double tree \$1.25



1 light 1 horse wagon \$2.50
1 4in. rubber belt \$1.00
1 2 horse spring wagon \$6.00
1 dump cart and harness \$6.00
1 corn sheller \$1.50
8 shoats \$24.00
1 sow \$12.00
2 staks bees \$2.00
1 churn and lot of crocks \$.75
1 heifer \$18.00
1 calf \$10.00
1 falling leaf table \$.25
1 copper kettle \$2.00
1 half bushel \$.25
1 telephone \$10.00
1 settee \$1.00
1 writing desk \$4.00
1 wardrobe \$2.00
1 set cane bottom chairs (chairs) \$.50
1 extension table \$2.50
1 clock \$1.00
1 wardrobe upstairs \$6.00
1 chest of drawers \$.25
1 suit furniture bureau bedstead table washstand \$8.00
1 table \$.25
1 sewing machine \$.50
1 stand \$.25

\$213.35

J.M. Hoover, Robert F Powell, C. B. Shuey

We the undersigned after being duly sworn appraised the personal property herein-above described of A. D. Tribbett, decd as shown us by his Admr. J. P. Tribbett, July 29th, 1903.

J. M. Hoover

C. B. Shuey

Robert F. Powell

I hereby certify that the above is a true inventory and that the above list constitutes all of the personal property of the intestate known to me. Given under my hand this 29th day of July 1903.

J. P. Tribbett, Admr.

In Augusta County Court November 9th, 1903

This inventory and appraisalment of the personal estate of Andrew Davidson Tribbett, decd. was presented in court, and having been examined and approved by Commissioner Joseph A. Waddell, is ordered to be recorded.

Teste "Harry Burnett" Clerk

The order of the items listed implies that the appraiser, J. P. Tribbett (possibly Andrew's brother), first listed items inside the mill, which included a few living necessities such as a place to sleep, a desk and tables, and a few kitchen appliances. Next he inventoried anything of value



Hebron Presbyterian Church, Staunton today. (Photograph by Angela Walthall)

outside, such as livestock and wagons, and then traveled inside the home, which is indicated to be two stories high, with “one wardrobe upstairs.” In addition, it is likely that J.P. Tribbett inventoried the first floor before the second, which would further indicate that the second floor held at least one bedroom and possibly a sewing room. The collection contains receipts for a Singer Sewing Machine, which may be the same that is listed in the inventory. Another item to make special note of inside the house is a telephone, worth ten dollars, which would have been very progressive for the time, and adds credence to the idea that Tribbett was an educated and important member of his community.¹²

Within a year of his death, the estate settlement was complete and Mary Tribbett was left with only \$59.41, while each of their four daughters received \$29.71. Andrew Tribbett’s funeral was conducted at Hebron Presbyterian Church, located outside of Staunton near Swoope, by Reverend Holmes Rolston, assisted by Reverend J. M. Plowden. Tribbett had been a member since April 15, 1894. Following the service, he was laid to rest at Thornrose Cemetery in Staunton. Despite whatever financial or other tribulations he faced during his lifetime, the obituary that was



printed in the *Staunton Spectator and Vindicator* on July 24, 1903, was nothing but admiring: "Mr. Andrew David Tribbett, one of (the) best known millers in this section, died suddenly at his home at Trinity Point Mills, near Churchville, Monday night, in his 67th year. Mr. Tribbett was born in Rockbridge County, but for many years had been conducting the milling business in Augusta, and was one of our most popular citizens, and was highly esteemed by all who knew him."¹³ Just as the mills were important to the society of Augusta County, the millers were as highly esteemed.

Endnotes

¹ Nancy Sorrells, "Early Valley Settlers Built Stone-Ground Economy," in *Mills of Augusta County*, compiled by Janet Baugher Downs, Earl J. Downs, and Nancy Sorrells (Staunton, Va.: Lot's Wife Publishing, 2004), ix-xi.

² Sorrells, ix-xi.

³ Jim Presgraves, ed., "Augusta County, Virginia, Families and History," from *Henry Hardesty's 1885 Historical and Geographical Encyclopedia* (Wytheville, Va.: Bookworm and Silverfish, 2005), 123.

⁴ Lowell Reidenbaugh, *The Virginia Regimental Histories Series: 27th Virginia Cavalry* (Lynchburg, Va.: H. E. Howard, Inc., 1993), 7, 20

⁵ Reidenbaugh, 39.

⁶ Reidenbaugh, 181; Presgraves, 124.

⁷ Hardesty, 123; 1870, 1880, 1890 U.S. Census Records

⁸ Hardesty 124, Deed of purchase by A. D. Tribbett to Fisher, July 9, 1873, Book 88, pg. 222; Deed of purchase by Thornton G. Stout to A. D. and M. E. Tribbett, May 2, 1878, Book 93, pg. 123; Deed of purchase by A. D. Tribbett to Thornton G. Stout, May 2, 1878, Book 93, pg. 173.

⁹ Deed of purchase by A. D. Tribbett to P. H. Baylor, January 21, 1887, Book 104, pg. 447; Deed of purchase by W. E. Mays to A. D. Tribbett, July 13, 1889, Book 108, pg. 449; Downs, Downs, and Sorrells, 227; *Chataigne's Augusta County, Virginia Gazeteer and Classified Business Directory*, 1888, accessed at www.newriversnotes.com/va/augu1888.htm; Nellie D. Drexel, WPA Historical Inventory, 1938.

¹⁰ Deed of purchase by J. C. Cochran to A. D. Tribbett, July 8, 1892, Book 117, pg. 367; 1900 U.S. Census; "A. D. Tribbett," *Staunton Spectator and Vindicator*, July 24, 1903, pg. 3, Staunton Public Library microfilm 16; Presgraves, 124; Letter, Robert W. to A. D. Tribbett, January 1, 1887, *A. D. Tribbett Business Papers*, Augusta County Historical Society.

¹¹ 2012-013, *The A. D. Tribbett Business Papers*, Augusta County Historical Society Archives; Microfilm, "City Directories of the United States: Staunton, Virginia 1888-1893," Staunton Public Library.

¹² "Inventory and Appraisement of the Personal Estate of A. D. Tribbett," Will Book 59, pg. 41, Augusta County Courthouse.

¹³ "A. D. Tribbett," *Staunton Spectator and Vindicator*; Hebron Presbyterian Church records; "Estate Settlement of A. D. Tribbett," Will Book 59, pg. 584, Augusta County Courthouse.



Andrew D. Tribbett's headstone at Thornrose Cemetery in Staunton. (Photograph by Angela Walthall)



"Laws and Generally Accepted Customs": Race, Culture, and Policy at Shenandoah National Park's Lewis Mountain

by David E. Whisnant

Primary Source History Service, Chapel Hill, N.C.

Editor's Note: The Augusta County Historical Society Spring Meeting was held on March 18, 2012, at Wilson Memorial High School in Fishersville. Shenandoah National Park Superintendent Martha Bogle gave a presentation about the park. The newly released guide to the park, written by Anne and David Whisnant, was sold at the meeting. This chapter from the book, written by David Whisnant, discusses the African-American recreation area within the park known as Lewis Mountain.

Several miles north of where Skyline Drive crosses Highway 33 stands a familiar brown National Park Service sign directing travelers to Shenandoah National Park's Lewis Mountain picnicking and camping area. Driving across the small rise that separates the area from the road, one sees cabins, camp sites arranged around loop drives, picnic tables, family tents, children riding bicycles. Nothing out of the ordinary.

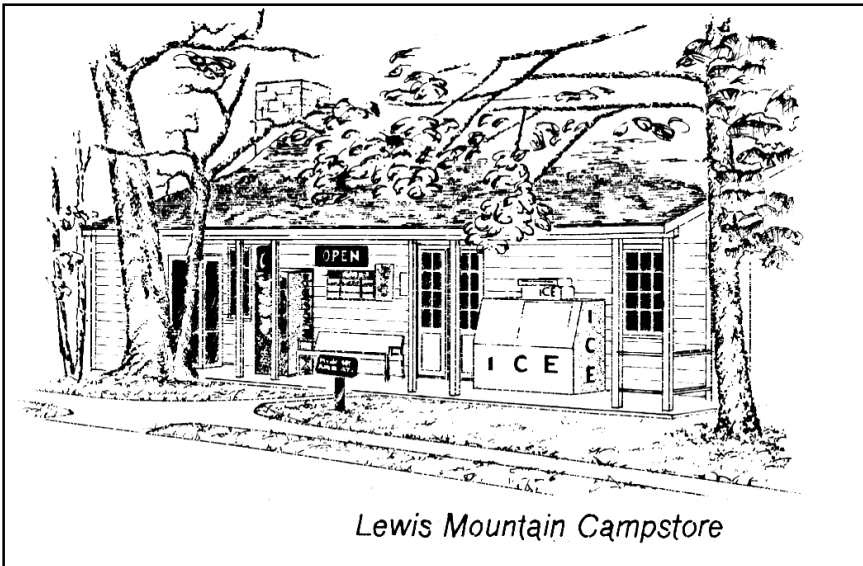
Everything looks as if could have been here since the early 1940s, as indeed much of it has been. To the right is a camp store with a large white ice locker on the porch.

But the ice locker wasn't always there, and in fact the store wasn't always a store. Therein lies one of the more complicated (and conflicted) stories in Shenandoah National Park's history.

Luray native Beulah Billings knew that story because she worked at Lewis Mountain. Reminiscing to historian Erin Krutko during the summer of 2007, Billings remembered the store when it was a lodge. "They had a beautiful fireplace," she recalled, though it is now hidden behind the store's walls. Billings worked there because Virginia Sky-Line Company, the park's concessionaire, preferred to hire blacks for an area that was, as a very different sign advised then, a "Negro Area."¹



Original Lewis Mountain Negro Area Sign. Shenandoah National Park Archive.



Lewis Mountain Campstore

Drawing of Lewis Mountain camp store as it appeared around 1938. Timothy Davis, Todd A. Croteau, and Christopher H. Marston (eds.), America's National Park Roads: Drawings from the Historic American Engineering Record (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), 137.

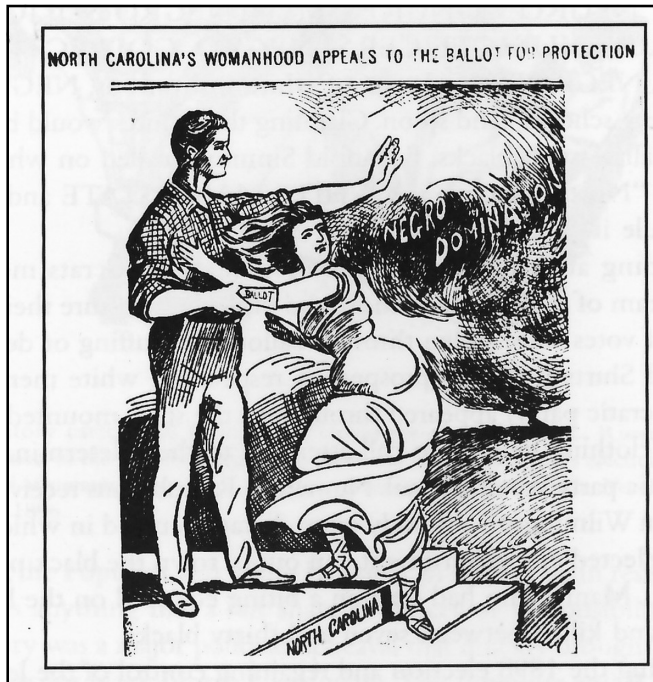


The Lewis Mountain story reminds us that some park landscapes result from layered histories that repay a closer look – another turn or two around the loop. Indeed, the small rise one had to cross to get into Lewis Mountain was put there so that white travelers in the 1940s would not be discomfited by the sight of blacks using the park. On the far side of that rise lie remnants of a history worth knowing – for what it says about Shenandoah National Park itself, about the National Park Service and race, and about the thorny issues that straddle the intersection of culture and public policy.

The National Racial Context of Shenandoah National Park's First Fifteen Years.

Fortunately, it has been decades since signs warned that this or that motel, bus seat, drinking fountain or school was for whites or blacks only. Overtly racist cartoons disappeared long ago from local newspapers, and more recent images of fire hoses and dogs, freedom marches and school boycotts have softened in our memories. Not all of the nation's racial problems have been solved, but real progress has been made, however fitfully.

Time, distance, and change carry a risk, however. We may by now



Negro Domination Cartoon, Raleigh (N.C.) News and Observer, 1898. From Paul D. Escott, Flora J. Hatley, and Jeffrey Crow, A History of African Americans in North Carolina, rev. ed. (Raleigh: N.C.: Dept. of Cultural Resources, Office of Archives and History, 2002), 116.



have lost some of the perspective we need in order to understand Lewis Mountain – a perspective not only local but national, not limited just to the 1930s, but extending forward and back in time as well.

What happened racially within the park during its early years was intricately connected to surrounding counties and towns (especially Luray), the state of Virginia, the National Park Service and the Department of the Interior, and (it is always useful to be reminded) the country at large.

The legal underpinnings of racism in what became the United States were being put into place before the Revolution, and such laws continued to be elaborated and refined for nearly two hundred years. Slavery was legal in Massachusetts by 1641 – about twenty years earlier than in Virginia, New York and New Jersey. The infamous slave codes gave slave owners (including those in New York and the District of Columbia) virtually absolute power. Slavery and the slave trade built not only the grand plantations of the South but also the mansions of Newport traders in slaves and rum, and the wealth of ivory traders in Hartford.² After the Civil War, the Black Codes drew color lines intended to preserve the social and cultural practices of slavery days.

Both federal and state laws (including pivotal Supreme Court decisions in 1857 and 1896) continued well into the twentieth century to ratify and reinforce racial prejudice and inequality. Reactionary responses to Reconstruction after the Civil War brought widespread racial hostility and violence.

Virginia passed its own race-based laws by 1650, and continued to elaborate them for more than 275 years. Perhaps most infamous among them were the Racial Integrity (anti-miscegenation) Act of 1924 and the Public Assemblage Act of 1926 – both passed at virtually the same time Shenandoah National Park was authorized. All public transportation was fully segregated by the time the park was dedicated in 1936.³

Closer by, Page County and Luray fit the national mold closely. Black residents were confined to West Luray; black businesses were concentrated in an area called “The Hill.” On into the 1960s, everything remained segregated; Luray’s last all-black school closed in 1966, a dozen years after *Brown v. Board of Education*.⁴ Not far down the road, Prince Edward County kept its public schools closed for five years (1959-1964) rather than integrate them.⁵ Following the “massive resistance” policy championed by Virginia Sen. Harry F. Byrd, Sr., schools were also shut down in Front Royal, Norfolk, and Charlottesville.⁶



Racism in Action: North and South

Thus although racism is popularly held to be a marker of laws and cultural practices especially characteristic of “the South,” history teaches otherwise. Racially- and culturally-based violence and riots have been known since pre-Revolutionary days in virtually all sections of the United States.

Some black slaves and indentured whites in Virginia’s Gloucester County planned a revolt as early as 1663; several of their number were discovered and beheaded. Slaves revolted in New York City in 1712 and 1741, and South Carolina’s bloody Stono Rebellion broke out in 1739. Had a violent storm not washed out roads and bridges leading to Richmond, Gabriel Prosser and a thousand other slaves (arms stored in readiness) might have reached the Virginia state capitol in 1800. Riots broke out in Cincinnati and Charleston in 1829, and in New York, Philadelphia, San Francisco and Boston in the 1830s, 1840s and 1850s.⁷

Nor did Emancipation end the violence. There were race riots in Pulaski, Tennessee in 1868; in Rock Springs, Wyoming in 1885; in Pittsburg, Denver, and Thibodaux, Louisiana in 1886 and 1887; in Wilmington, North Carolina in 1898; in Omaha in 1891 and 1909; in Atlanta in 1906 and Springfield, Illinois in 1908; in East St. Louis in 1917; and in Omaha, Chicago, and Tulsa shortly after World War I. Others post-dated the Roaring Twenties and the Great Depression: in Harlem in 1935 and in Detroit and Los Angeles in 1943.

Throughout the country, riots accompanied the civil rights struggles of the 1960s: in Harlem, Watts (Los Angeles), Rochester, South Boston, Philadelphia, Chicago, Louisville, Detroit, Newark, Baltimore, and Washington, DC. One of the worst of all time took place in Miami in 1980. And through those years, lynch mobs took the lives of nearly 5,000 black Americans.⁸

Scholars such as Thomas Sugrue have recently begun to pay closer attention to northern resistance to the civil rights movement, as earlier scholars did for the south. Sugrue observes that the “good” north vs. “bad” south polarity underlying popular accounts of the movement is not supportable in the face of decades of evidence of northern racial discrimination and injustice, as northern civil rights activists themselves have pointed out. “Whites only” signs may have been rare, but racial exclusion was both widespread and effective, and injustice was pervasive.⁹

In *Sundown Towns* (2005), James Loewen reported on the thousands of towns all across the U.S. where, according to local laws or



established custom (or both), all blacks had to be out of town by sundown. None could buy homes or establish businesses there. Thousands of towns (and counties) took the sundown route, from the 1890s on into the 1970s. Illinois alone had 475 of them. Countless suburbs, Loewen discovered, originated as sundown communities.¹⁰

Socially, economically, politically and culturally, then, the culture of racism into which the Shenandoah National Park was born in 1936 was deeply entrenched and pervasive. But what about the National Park Service, the Department of the Interior, and the New Deal itself?

Race, the New Deal, and the National Park Service, 1925-1936

When Franklin D. Roosevelt was elected in 1932, southern congressmen chaired two thirds of the most important committees in the Congress, wielding great influence over the legislative process. Many used their power to block or dilute civil rights legislation.¹¹

For tactical and strategic reasons, President Roosevelt allowed the “Dixie bloc” to have effective veto power over New Deal programs, stripping the initiatives of features that did not “respect” established racial boundaries and customs. As early as 1935, one black critic of the New Deal’s Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA) argued that the AAA was likely to benefit white cotton farmers much more than black ones.¹²

Eminent labor historian Eric Foner observed later that blacks benefitted from New Deal programs differently from whites. Social Security, for example, excluded agricultural and domestic workers, a large percentage of whom were black. The AAA’s cotton price support program drove tens of thousands of black sharecroppers off the land, and the Federal Housing Administration channeled its mortgage money into segregated communities.¹³

“To blacks,” Foner concluded, the New Deal revealed “the persistent hold of racial inequality on public policy.” Indeed, Roosevelt himself, Foner added, “seems to have had little personal interest in race relations or civil rights,” unlike his wife Eleanor and his Interior Secretary Harold Ickes.¹⁴

Later critics of the New Deal observed that the National Recovery Administration (NRA) created incentives for white racists to discriminate against low-wage black labor.

Lewis Mountain historian Erin Krutko observes that Southern poli-



ticians (including Virginia Senators Harry Byrd and Carter Glass) “viewed the New Deal as a threat to “their economic and social conservatism, their racial views, their . . . belief in class privilege, and their . . . control of the folks back home.”¹⁵

This culture of racism within New Deal agencies extended to the Department of the Interior, within which was the National Park Service. Even though his predecessor Ray Wilbur had tried to desegregate the Department of the Interior, Interior Secretary Harold Ickes inherited an agency that was difficult (and slow) to change.¹⁶

It turned out, in any case, that the price of locating a new national park in Virginia was an agreement to abide by the state’s stringently racist laws and “generally accepted customs.” Three years before Shenandoah National Park was officially established, NPS official Arno B. Cammerer noted in the margin of a memo that “provision for colored guests” would have to be made. By 1936 (by which time Cammerer had been promoted to Director), NPS policy explicitly contemplated creation of “separate facilities for white and colored people to the extent only as is necessary to conform with the generally accepted customs long established in Virginia [Hence] separate rest rooms, cabin colonies and picnic ground facilities should be provided.”¹⁷

Cammerer’s superior Harold Ickes was urging at the same time that “colored camping grounds” and “picnic places” needed to be developed forthwith. It would be years before Ickes confided that he hoped to develop a “non-discriminatory policy” throughout the Park Service.¹⁸

Thus the “separate but equal” requirement – in accord with local laws and customs – was written into Shenandoah National Park’s master plan in 1936, but the decision proved difficult either to implement or to change.¹⁹ NPS Director Demaray (1940-1951) directed that the policy was not to operate “to such an extent as to interfere with the complete enjoyment of the park equally by all alike,” but that proved much easier said than done.²⁰

It was within such a context that the Lewis Mountain area was planned and built. Consistent with NPS policy, the summer 1937 contract with Shenandoah’s concessionaire (the Virginia Sky-Line Company) included a “colored picnic grounds” at Lewis Mountain. The Park Service wanted the Company to develop the area quickly, but the facility did not open that summer. Some initial work had been done by June of the following year, but a second such facility planned for further south at Jenkins Gap was never begun.



Even before Lewis Mountain opened, the separate but equal policy had come under criticism from all sides. Secretary Ickes's departmental lawyers were telling him it was unwise, but his Negro Affairs advisor counseled a "go slow" approach.²¹ Virginia Sky-Line claimed it was likely to lose money because there was "no demand" for such facilities. The Interior Department's Adviser on Negro Affairs W.J. Trent wanted the separate but equal policy itself ended. Park Superintendent James Lassiter insisted that already available facilities for whites and blacks were equal, even though as late as the winter of 1939 the Lewis Mountain area still had no lodge, overnight cabins, picnic areas, or comfort stations.

Tired of the wrangling, Secretary Ickes in February 1939 asked Senators Byrd and Glass about just ending segregation in the park altogether. Byrd said he had heard no complaints, and reminded Ickes that the agreement to create the park included a promise to abide by all state laws.²²

Faced with such dissension, Ickes moved cautiously. The park would "generally" follow state law and custom, he directed, but Virginia Sky-Line had to provide facilities for blacks that were really equal. Signs referring to racial separation had to be taken down, and one existing picnic area had to be designated for black as well as white use. The Pinnacles area was chosen, though black picnickers and motorists were also allowed to use the far corners (only) of the South River and Elk Wallow picnic grounds.

In the spring of 1939, Virginia Sky-Line agreed to provide additional dining rooms for blacks at Lewis Mountain, Panorama and Swift Run Gap. Dickey Ridge, Skyland and Big Meadows dining rooms would remain white only, but lunch counters could serve blacks. By then the Lewis Mountain picnic area had been finished, and a lodge and overnight cabins on the site were completed soon thereafter.²³

"The Joint Was Jumpin'": Lewis Mountain as a "Negroes Only" Area

Conflicted negotiations about what exactly Lewis Mountain was going to be, how and by whom it would be used, and how segregated Shenandoah National Park would remain continued for years. But in the meantime, since recreational areas and overnight accommodations for black Americans were scarce outside the Park, black visitors made regular use of Lewis Mountain.

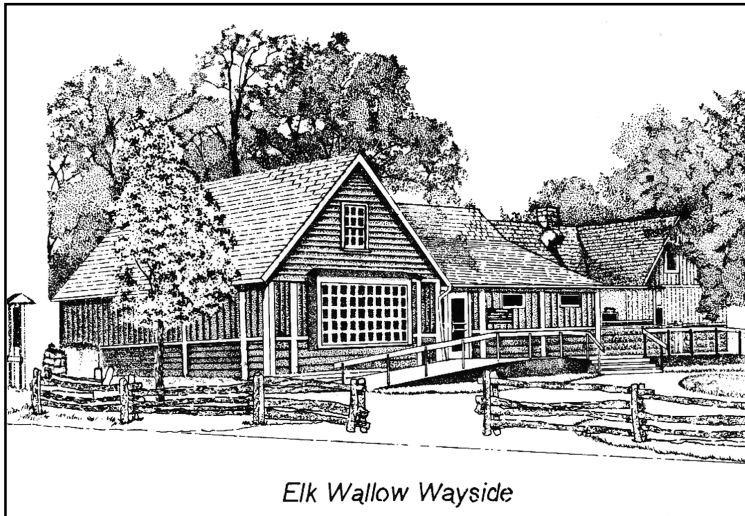


Indeed, the area came slowly to be a major gathering and recreational space for local blacks as well as others from elsewhere. Virginia Sky-Line hired black workers and managers from the local area, and the managers in turn tended to hire their young relatives.

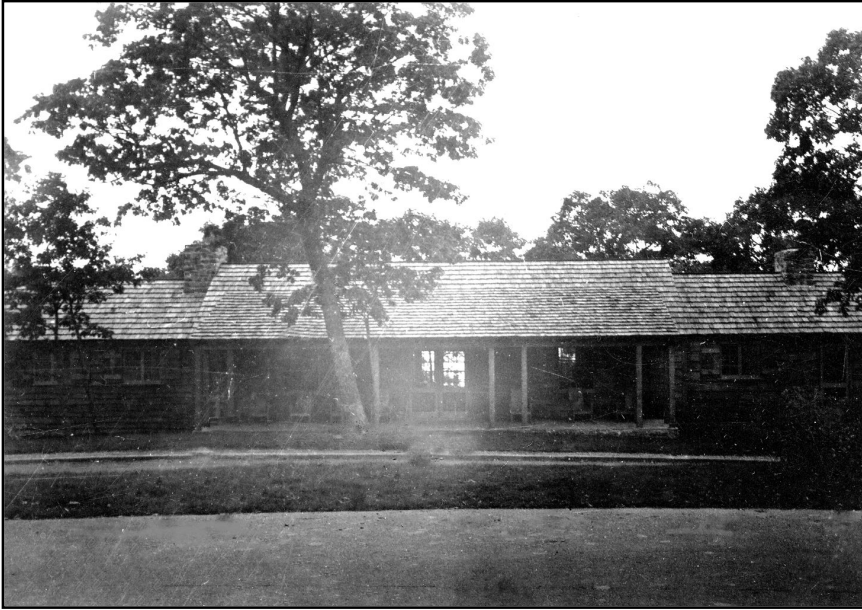
Lloyd and Amelia Tutt worked at Lewis Mountain as managers for twelve years.²⁴ In a 1978 interview, Lloyd Tutt recalled that he had been instructed to tell white visitors seeking accommodations that the campground was full. He didn't turn anyone away, however, so that the area became unofficially integrated at night. A hot band played boogie woogie on Friday nights, and word had it that the food was better than anywhere else in the park. "The joint was jumpin'," Tutt recalled.²⁵

Accustomed to having to resort to the *Negro Motorist Green Book* to find restaurants and overnight accommodations, African American travelers embraced Lewis Mountain, arriving in family cars or buses – sometimes as many as 300 at a time.²⁶

Romantically inclined local teens seeking to rendezvous unimpeded by parental supervision also took advantage of the privacy Lewis Mountain offered.²⁷



Architectural Drawing for Elk Wallow Wayside, 1938. Croteau et al., America's National Park Roads and Parkways: Drawings from the Historic American Engineering Record (2004), 137.



Lewis Mountain Lodge; National Park Service photo.



"Lewis Mt. Picnic Grounds for Negroes," was how the original sign at the picnic area read. National Park Service Archive.



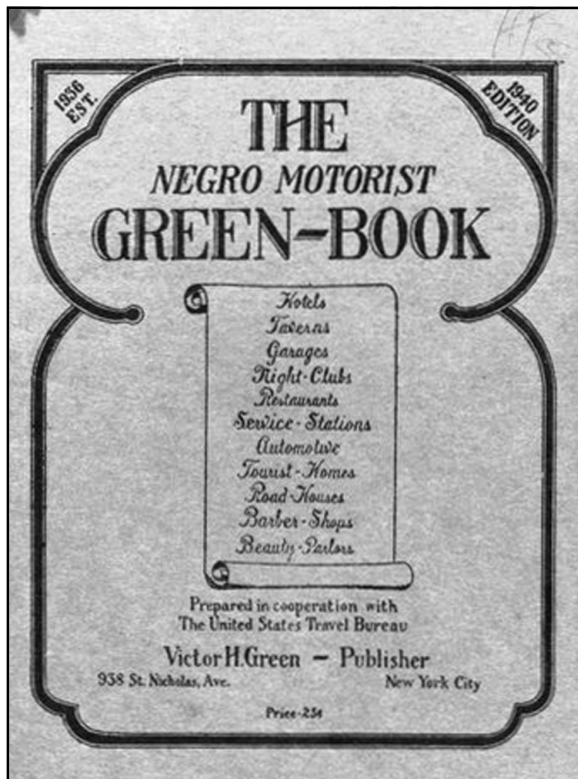
Lewis Mountain managers Lloyd and Amelia Tutt; photos courtesy Shenandoah National Park.

Signs vs. Facts: Desegregating Lewis Mountain and Shenandoah National Park

The earliest Shenandoah park signs, maps and brochures made clear that segregation was the official policy, but they drew many complaints. As complaints multiplied, Secretary Ickes ordered the offending maps and brochures withdrawn. But the deeply rooted practice of racial separation was not easily obliterated, especially since the policy the documents referred to remained unchanged, the signs were slowly and grudgingly removed, and infrastructural artifacts remained for years as testimony to the fact of segregation.

Despite repeated protests from the NAACP and individual visitors, Superintendent Lassiter dismissed complaints as emanating from “a few radicals,” and exaggerated reports of racial incidents in order to emphasize the danger of desegregating park facilities. Rangers even marked newly printed race-neutral maps by hand to show the “Negro” areas, and Lassiter himself called for “more and bigger ‘For White Only’ signs.”²⁸

The Lewis Mountain development had in fact been rushed to completion in mid-1940 partly, according to NPS Director Arno Cammerer, as “an insurance policy against future excessive demands



The Green Book, published from the mid-1930s into the 1960s, was an indispensable traveling companion for blacks, who were forbidden to use “white only” public accommodations.



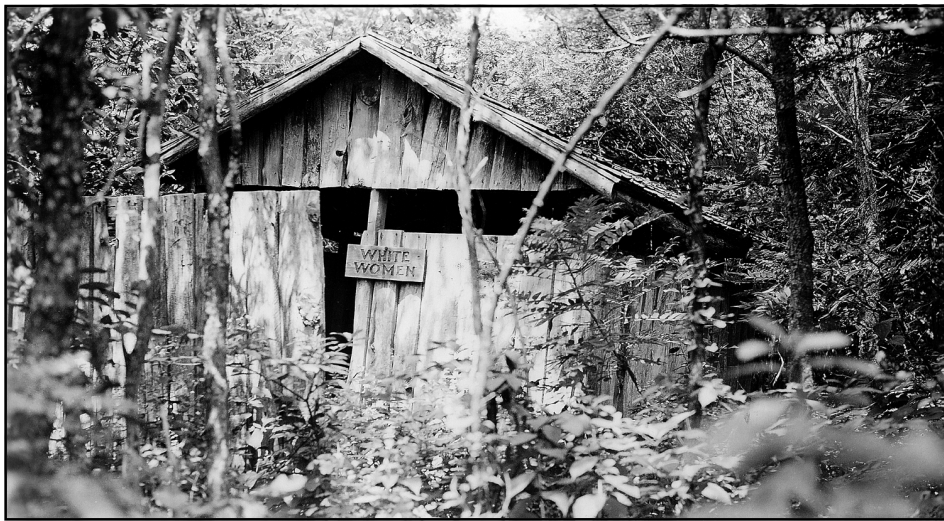
Black tour group at Lewis Mountain, around 1950. Shenandoah National Park Archive.



for installations for Negroes.”²⁹ Cammerer’s strained relations with Secretary Ickes over this and other issues led to his replacement by Newton B. Drury in August 1940.

In any case, a detailed January 1941 NPS study of the park’s racial situation reported that Negro visitors accounted for only slightly over one percent of the total. Except at Lewis Mountain, lodging was available to whites only. Dining rooms for blacks were available at Lewis Mountain, Panorama, and Swift Run Gap, though lunch counters, gift shops and gas stations were open to both races. Toilets were separate except at Lewis Mountain and Pinnacles. The Lewis Mountain camping area was mostly unused; the lodge had an occupancy rate of only about five percent, and the picnic ground about double that.³⁰

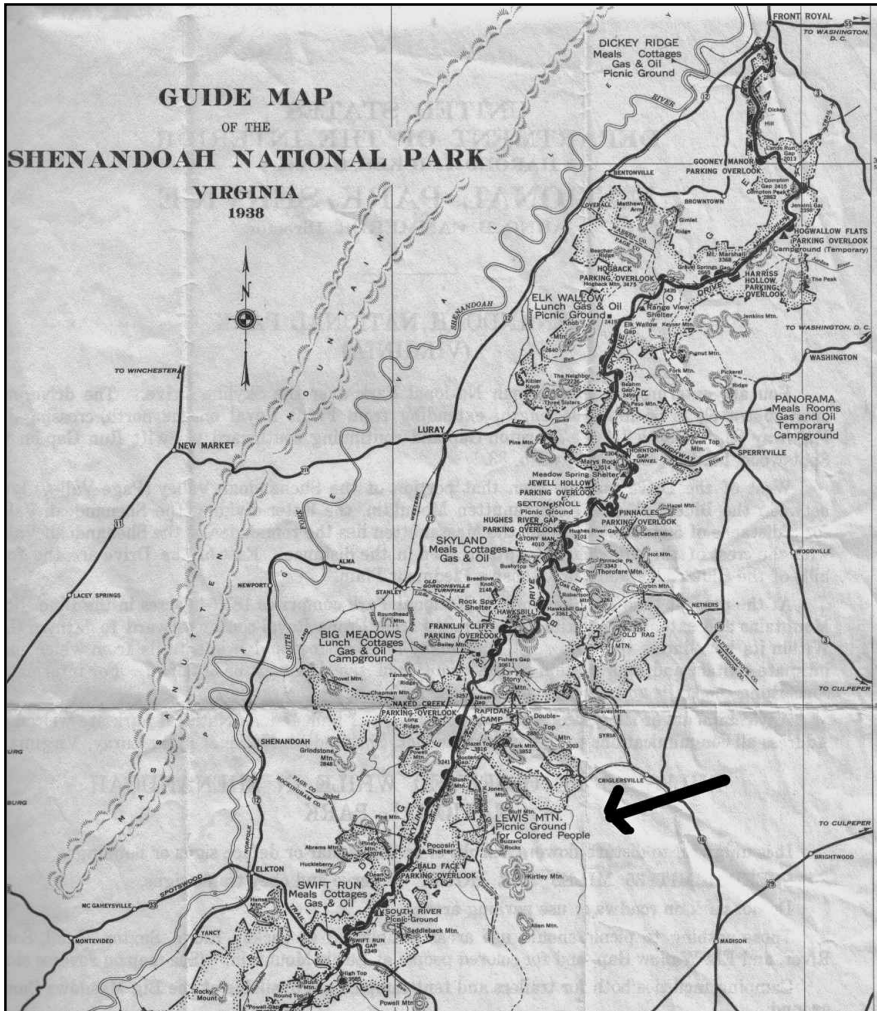
The Lewis Mountain area was completed just as Drury—more inclined to end segregation than was his predecessor—became Director of the Park Service. He immediately declared all picnic grounds open to both races. Equally decisively, he demoted Superintendent Lassiter to regional



Comfort station for white women, dating from period during which park facilities were segregated. Shenandoah National Park Archive.

engineer and transferred him (over Virginia Sen. Byrd’s protest) to New Mexico. Nevertheless, the “For Negroes” sign remained at Lewis Mountain, as did the “White Only” sign at Big Meadows.³¹ Five years after the park’s opening, then, the issue of racial segregation was far from resolved.

Wrangling over segregation came to a temporary halt during the early days of World War II, as overall visitation declined dramatically



Guide Map to the Shenandoah National Park Virginia 1938, with location of Lewis Mountain indicated by hand-drawn arrow.

throughout the national park system. Lewis Mountain and Big Meadows opened for the 1942 season, but closed only two weeks later. The National Park Service itself was virtually shut down during the war, but the debate over segregation in the parks did not end.

Taking advantage of the lull, the Interior Department's Adviser on Negro Affairs urged that segregation be ended throughout the system, but the Southeast Regional Office queried a few parks and then discouraged it. Shenandoah's new Superintendent Edward Freeland's views did not differ markedly from Lassiter's.³²

It appeared that the issue would have to be resolved at an even



higher level, but President Roosevelt died in April, 1945, and his New Deal administrators began to drift away. Needing conservative southern votes in Congress as Roosevelt had, President Truman was not eager to push the civil rights issue. Interior Secretary Ickes, one of Roosevelt's stronger advocates for expanding civil rights, stayed in office until February, 1946. His final official act was to abolish segregation throughout the Park Service, including facilities operated by concessionaires.

But even Ickes's decisive statement did not fully end the problem at Shenandoah. Concessionaire Virginia Sky-Line balked at the order. Ickes was adamant, but his successor Julius Krug (1946-49) was willing to compromise. Through Sen. Byrd, he worked out a plan for gradual change, and park facilities stayed segregated through the 1946 season.³³

Responding to growing domestic racial violence and international pressures after the war, however, President Truman became more aggressive on civil rights. In June, 1947, he proclaimed that the federal government must become "a friendly, vigilant defender of the rights and equalities of all Americans."³⁴ Bolstered by a report from his Committee on Civil Rights in October, he reasserted the principal in his 1948 State of the Union address.

Thereafter, no possible grounds remained for continuing segregation in any form at Shenandoah National Park. The Lewis Mountain area and the dining room at Panorama opened for joint use during the summer of 1947, and following Truman's appointment of Oscar Chapman (a strong advocate of racial equality) as Interior Secretary in 1949, all remaining facilities became integrated. The season of 1950 was the first completely integrated one in the park's history.³⁵

Lewis Mountain and the Park: What to Say About It Now?

Use of Lewis Mountain by local blacks declined in the 1960s, as new federal civil rights laws opened other nearby facilities. Lloyd and Amelia Tutt retired, weakening Lewis Mountain's connections with local clientele. Homecomings and Sunday School picnics moved elsewhere, drawn partly by the novel availability of swimming pools.³⁶ The "Negroes Only" and "Whites Only" signs were taken down.

But the question remains, as Lewis Mountain historian Erin Krutko observed, how best to interpret and inform the public about the area's role in the park's history. We have marked and preserved some of the "heroic" sites of the post-World War II civil rights struggle: the Woolworth



lunch counter in Greensboro N.C., Little Rock (Ark.) High School (www.nps/chsc), the Selma to Montgomery civil rights march (www.nps/semo), and the Lorraine Motel in Memphis. Others reach further back in our history: DeSoto National Memorial in Florida (www.nps/deso), Wounded Knee, Harpers Ferry (www.nps/hafe and Andersonville Prison (www.nps/ande), San Francisco's Presidio and the Spanish American War (www.nps/prsf), the site of the 1912 Bread and Roses strike at Lawrence MA (<http://breadandrosesheritage.org/>), and the World War II-era Manzanar Relocation Center (www.nps/manz),³⁷

But not all sites tied to racial issues are associated with dramatic or heroic events. Some help preserve the more pervasive record of the daily, mundane fact of racial separation, inequality and strife. Twenty miles east of Skyline Drive, in Orange Virginia, stands the railroad station on James Madison's Montpelier estate, restored meticulously to its "whites only" Jim Crow configuration.

This history of the "Negroes Only" Lewis Mountain area in Shenandoah National Park stands as a revealing example of the origins and forms of segregation in particular public places, and as a reminder of the difficulty of moving beyond "laws and generally accepted customs" that are in fact less generally accepted than they are held to be by their major proponents and benefactors. The challenge of facing the history of such places and customs, of repurposing sites (especially public ones) that embody them, and of interpreting those sites for a public which may lack effective memory of them is a perennial one. The National Park Service continues to face it currently, as it did at Lewis Mountain more than a half-century ago.

Endnotes

¹ Krutko, *"Under the Sky All of Us Are Free": A Cultural History of Lew Mountain, Racial Segregation, and African American Visitation Shenandoah National Park* (Williamsburg: American Studies Program, College of William and Mary, 2009), 170.

² Anne Farrow, Joel Lang, and Jennifer Frank, *Complicity: How the North Promoted, Prolonged, and Profited From Slavery* (NY: Ballentine, 2005), 95-120, 193-214.

³ Krutko, *Under the Sky*, 16-18.

⁴ Krutko, *Under the Sky*, 125-135, 160-163.

⁵ Virginia Historical Society, *The Civil Rights Movement in Virginia* (<http://www.vahistorical.org/civilrights/pec.htm>; accessed 5 March 2010).

⁶ "Harry F. Byrd (1887-1966)," *Encyclopedia Virginia* (http://www.encyclopediaofvirginia.org/Byrd_Harry_Flood_1887-1966; accessed 5 March 2010).

⁷ Farrow, Lang, and Frank, *Complicity*, 77-94.

⁸ From extensive scholarly research summarized in Wikipedia, "Mass racial violence in the United States" (accessed 4 March 2010).

⁹ Thomas J. Sugrue, *Sweet Land of Liberty: The Forgotten Struggle for Civil Rights in the North* (NY: Random House, 2008).

¹⁰ James W. Loewen, *Sundown Towns: A Hidden Dimension of American Racism* (NY: New Press, 2005).



¹¹ Krutko, *Under the Sky*, 33, 58.

¹² E. E. Lewis, "Black Cotton Farmers and the AAA," *Opportunity: Journal of Negro Life* 13 (March 1935): 72.

¹³ On identification of this cartoon, see David T. Beito, "Blacks Versus the New Deal," History News Network (<http://hnn.us/blogs/entries/7608.html>; accessed 3/10/10).

¹⁴ Eric Foner, "Racial Discrimination and the New Deal," *Fathom: The Source for Online Learning* (<http://www.fathom.com/feature/121864/index.html>; accessed 5 March 2010).

¹⁵ Krutko, *Under the Sky*, 32-33.

¹⁶ Krutko, *Under the Sky*, 23-28, 35; Darwin Lambert, *Administrative History of Shenandoah National Park, 1924-1976* (Luray VA: n.p., 1979), 271.

¹⁷ Engle, "Laboratory for Change" from *Resource Management Newsletter* (1996); <http://home.nps.gov/shen/historyculture/segregation.htm>; accessed 26 May 2010.

¹⁸ Demaray letter of 18 September 1936 and later Ickes memo quoted in Demaray memo to Lassiter, both quoted in Lambert, *Administrative History*, 272; Ickes letter of 21 May 1942, in Lambert, *Administrative History*, 277.

¹⁹ Krutko, *Under the Sky*, 31-32.

²⁰ Demaray letter of 18 September 1936 and later Ickes memo quoted in Demaray memo to Lassiter, both quoted in Lambert, *Administrative History*, 272; Ickes letter of 21 May 1942, in Lambert, *Administrative History*, 277; Krutko, *Under the Sky*, 41-43.

²¹ Lambert, *Administrative History*, 273.

²² Krutko, *Under the Sky*, 47-52.

²³ *Ibid.*, 52-55.

²⁴ Krutko, *Under the Sky*, 136ff., 110, 143-145.

²⁵ Shumaker, *Untold Stories* (<http://www.pbs.org/nationalparks/media/pdfs/tnp-abi-untold-stories-pt-01-segregation.pdf>), 27-28.

²⁶ *The Negro Motorist Green Book* (1949); published annually under varying titles for many years beginning in 1936.

²⁷ Krutko, *Under the Sky*, 149-150, 154-156. For further information and additional photographs of Lewis Mountain, see Engle, "Laboratory for Change." A new exhibit at Byrd Visitor Center (2007) endeavors to interpret all aspects of the Park's past, including Lewis Mountain. See review by David E. and Anne Mitchell Whisnant, "Blue Ridge Parkway, America's Favorite Journey," Blue Ridge Parkway, and "Within a Day's Drive of Millions," Shenandoah National Park. *Journal of American History* 96:3 (2009).

²⁸ Krutko, *Under the Sky*, 66-69, 77-80

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 72.

³⁰ Lambert, *Administrative History*, 280-281.

³¹ Krutko, *Under the Sky*, 85.

³² *Ibid.*, 87-89.

³³ *Ibid.*, 90-94.

³⁴ Truman made this remark in an address at the Lincoln Memorial, June 28, 1947 (<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/primary-resources/truman-naacp47>; accessed 13 January 2013).

³⁵ Truman accepted Krug's resignation in early November 1949, and chose Interior Undersecretary Chapman to replace him, effective December 1. *Southeast Missourian*, 11 November 1949, p. 1 (<http://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=1893&dat=19491111&id=ihMpAAAAIABJ&sjid=3dYEAAAAIABJ&pg=4540,2396640>; accessed 13 January 2013).

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 159-164.

³⁷ One extended treatment of race and culture in relation to the national parks is Robert H. Keller and Michael F. Turek, *American Indians and the National Parks* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1998). Several NPS sites related to industrial strife are discussed in Teresa S. Moyer and Paul A. Shackel, *The Making of Harpers Ferry National Historical Park: A Devil, Two Rivers, and a Dream* (Lanham MD: AltaMira Press, 2008), 133-150. The history of De Soto National Memorial is treated in David E. and Anne Mitchell Whisnant, *Small Park, Large Issues: De Soto National Memorial and the Commemoration of a Difficult History* (Atlanta: National Park Service, 2007).



The life of an enlisted Rebel through the eyes of the Frey Brothers of Augusta County

by Jarrett Dunning

Editor's Note: Jarrett Dunning, a student at Emory & Henry College, interned for the summer with ACHS. As a Hamrick Scholar, he studied this collection of letters from the Frey brothers and wrote the following paper about his work in that collection.

The documents used in the course of this research are composed of letters from the Hamrick Collection housed at the Augusta County Historical Society. Prior to this research nothing more than a listing of the contents of the Hamrick Collection had been created. Both the Hamrick and Frey surnames are found in the collection, but no direct connection between the two families is made apparent from the letters within. The Frey letters found in the collection provide a rich supply of primary source material and it is from these letters that this research is founded.

There are many tales of heroism and patriotism in war, but for many soldiers, their sole aim is that of mere survival and a sense of duty toward their homeland. The American Civil War was no different in this respect. The case of the three Augusta County-based Frey brothers is a prime example of this phenomenon. They fought with great courage throughout the war for the Confederacy, but their service was far more an act of duty and obligation rather than of patriotism. They pined for an early end to the conflict and for a return to the peace and tranquility of their homes. They suffered severe privation during the war, but deep down they didn't seem to care whether the Confederacy won or lost. They fought Union troops with tenacity, but bore no deep hatred for the enemy. Their sense of duty and obligation was to their home and family and as long as they could return to that, not much else mattered.

When the Frey brothers enlisted in the Confederate army in Staunton, Virginia, they did not come for southern independence or to answer the calls of the Old Dominion; they came because of their father's wishes. Joseph Frey wrote in a letter to his brother dated 16



February 1862, that, "I have often intended to listen to my father. And if he says I must enlist for the war, I will do so, and if not, I shall not."¹ The three brothers, William, Samuel, and Joseph, all showed distaste for battle and the life in the Confederate military in their writings. At least two of the brothers, William and Joseph, wrote from Camp Allegheny and it is from there that their story begins.

In the fifth century BCE Sun Tzu wrote *The Art of War*, in which he explained that, "The General who is skilled in defense hides in the most secret recesses of the earth; he who is skilled in attack flashes forth from the topmost heights of heaven. Thus on the one hand we have [the] ability to protect ourselves; on the other, a victory that is complete."² General Ed Johnson took Camp Allegheny and made it both a recess for the defense of the Shenandoah Valley and a topmost height from which to strike those who sought entrance into the Valley.

Camp Allegheny, located in what is now Pocahontas County in West Virginia, lay 4,200 feet above sea level and stood as the highest Confederate camp in the east during the whole of the war. There existed an uphill track for the enemy on all sides save the rear. The three roads leading to the camp were the Staunton-Parkersburg Pike from the north, the Buffalo Ridge Road curving from the southwest, and the Buffalo Run Road from the west. All wound uphill, twisting and turning, to converge on the Yeager farm. It was no evening stroll for an enemy to take.³ General Johnson got straight to work upon his arrival at Camp Allegheny by seeing to its defense. Along with the defense provided by the geographical advantages, Johnson concluded that once the camp was properly cleared and provisions were supplied, it would be impregnable against any northern aggressor.⁴ Although building a camp was not an easy task, long days, calloused hands, and sore backs were the price paid for defense and refuge. Johnson did not rest until the men were housed adequately. The soldiers were kept hard at work clearing acre after acre of the Yeager farm to provide fortifications and housing.⁵ The camp life was far from agreeable. A sword hanging over the men's heads was the harsh weather conditions. One of the Frey brothers wrote 16 February 1862, "We have had another snow here. It is about ten inches deep. The weather is very changeable out there. We have snow or rain nearly half the week. It is very disagreeable out here owing to the weather."⁶

The description does not do justice to the cold, snowy world



Camp Allegheny today

that gave rise to the unfathomable conditions in which most men had to live. A soldier in Camp Allegheny named Rylander wrote in his diary on 26 November 1861, that, "Here I am with sixteen men, quartered in a mud-daubed log hut, only sixteen feet square. There is hardly room enough to be down, and yet we must sleep. There is less room around the fire; only five or six can crowd around it—the balance of us are shivering and hoping for the future. The floor is covered with blankets, cooking utensils, flour, meat, guns, cartridge boxes, knapsacks, dirt, snow, mud, and ice. There is not a foot of surplus room. The whole house is crowded and is about as disagreeable a place as I care ever to have anything to do with."⁷

In addition to the weather, the Frey brothers had to contend with the problem of food, something common not just with the men of Camp Allegheny, but with all the soldiers serving the Confederacy. At the beginning of the Civil War, the Confederacy was overly optimistic about its ability to feed its soldiers. The rations of a southern enlisted soldier were at first equivalent to the amount given in the United States Army. Yet by the summer of 1861, the southern cause was feeling the pangs of



hunger. The summer after the Battle of First Manassas which occurred 21 July 1861, P.G.T. Beauregard petitioned President Jefferson Davis not to send any more men out of fear of not being able to feed them.⁸ The Frey brothers fared better than some with the availability of food for purchase at the camp, but inflation had hit the Confederacy when Joseph Frey wrote home from Camp Allegheny in March of 1862 that:

We received the provisions which you all sent us. We are truly thankful to you all for putting yourselves to the trouble for us. We can't get anything out here hardly for the money. Pies are 50 [cents] a piece out here, eggs are 50.05 [cents] per dozen, chickens are 30 [cents] a piece, apples are 30 cents a dozen. Such hardly ever can be got at that price. Butter is 30 [cents] a pound. We have plenty of beef though I am so tired of beef. I can't hardly look at it.⁹

In addition to the internal struggle with hunger, the Confederate soldier also had to contend with the issue of the aforementioned external elements' effects upon his personal comfort. With clothing short at hand, this struggle was often fierce. As with the food rations, the Confederate government overestimated its ability to deliver the goods as promised. Richmond had designed a standard uniform for the Confederate soldier, one that was a double-breasted tunic of grey with two rows of buttons. Pants were blue and cut with extra slack to cover the shoe. The overcoats for winter months were double-breasted grey flannel and the hats were modeled on the French kepi. This standard uniform was the requirement on the books for the duration of the war.¹⁰

However, the problem of uniforms was more complex. Jefferson Davis informed his commanders that volunteers were to furnish their own clothing. The reason was obvious: until the Confederacy's contracts with southern manufacturers could be fulfilled, there was no abundance in clothing. The industrial production of clothes was certainly not at its peak in the agricultural economy of the southern states. It took time for the fulfillment of any contract. Furthermore, buying from Europe became less of an option as the war continued due to the northern blockade of the southern coast, which effectively cut off trade with the rest of the world.¹¹ The soldiers were more or less on their own and relied upon their families and communities more often than not. This was the case for the Frey brothers. One wrote on 8 September 1861, that, "I want you to bring my blue shirt that I had made when in the militia and also my . . . pair of shoes. I am afraid that . . . my



shoes will not last.”¹² Samuel Frey wrote in November that, “You need not send or bring my overcoat because it would not do me any good; it would be too small to wear over my coat. I stand in need of an overcoat very badly. I am glad to try and draw one but clothes are very hard to get. I have only one blanket, yet I am trying to draw another, but it seems they are very slow about getting any.”¹³

It is hard to imagine the attention to duty of soldiers when they had to face not only the constant threat of an enemy attack, but also threats from the elements in the very land they sought to protect. For soldiers with nothing more than one blanket and no overcoat, the cold Virginia winter was certainly fierce. However, to do one’s duty did not mean that one enjoyed it. Indeed, one can only guess at the disdain for duty that many of the soldiers felt when facing cold winter nights, empty stomachs, and enemy bullets. Many cursed duty to hell as they trudged onward in the face of such conditions. One cannot be surprised when reading one of William Frey’s letters on the matter.

We live on bread and beef [and] sometimes not enough of that. Hence what you sent me reminds me of home. I would like very well to get home, but there is no possible way of getting home unless I run off and come home—but then I would be punished severely. I shall stay here until my time of service expires, and then I intend to get home at the hazard of my life.¹⁴

The Frey brothers were certainly not southern patriots willing to die unnecessarily to serve the Confederate cause. They rose to the call of duty, and if no more was needed, no more would be given to the campaign of secession. The desire for a furlough or a substitute is a common thread in the correspondence of the three brothers. Joseph Frey wrote to his wounded brother (most likely William) on 26 July 1862, telling him that, “The Capt. said he wants you to report to the Dr. at Staunton and send a certificate to him so he will know how you are now. All you will have to do [is] to report to him and go back home. You must try to stay at home if you possibly can.”¹⁵

The Frey brothers appear to have been very practical in their opinions of the war and the possibility of Confederate success. The skepticism that they held concerning service in the army translated to their deep concerns of the true value of Confederate money and the probability that it would hold no value if their side lost the war. In August of 1862, Joseph Frey wrote, “I have 50.00 in my pocket now,



Gen. Edward Johnson

and they owe me 51.00 yet, which I will get before long. I do not know what to do with it. If you could get a discharge and buy some land, we could put all our money in land and it would be safe."¹⁶ However, one could venture to say that neither money, nor food, weather, nor clothing was upon the minds of the Frey brothers on 13 December 1861. It was a day that none of them would forget: the day that the Battle of Camp Allegheny occurred.

Just before dawn on a cold winter day, similar to the previous ones, the men slumbered until awaking suddenly to the sound of loud beating drums calling them to arms. Grabbing their equipment, the men ran outside to meet the brisk, cold air upon their faces, which destroyed all remnants of sleep. Union Brigadier General Robert Milroy had come from his camp at Cheat Mountain to challenge Ed "Allegheny" Johnson to battle. Equipped with fewer troops, as was often the case for the Confederates, Johnson was in for quite the engagement. Johnson ordered Major Albert G. Reger to take his 25th Virginians down the pike to aid the pickets below. He also ordered Reger to send some of his men up the steep hillside to the right of the pike. With about sixty of his men at the top of the ridge, Reger placed the rest of his command on the south side of the picket line. On the Staunton-Parkersburg Turnpike there existed a 270-degree bend in the road. When the pike went down westward it oddly converted the north side of the road into the southwest side. It was on this slope of dense brush that Reger's troops waited for the enemy.¹⁷

In regard to the right flank of the camp, Johnson ordered the commanders of the 31st Virginia and the 9th Virginia, Colonel George W. Hansbrough and Major Francis Bogkin, to place their men at the ridge north of the camp. The north ridges of the camp were covered with fallen timber, over which the men had to struggle to make their way to the enemy. Some men were sent to picket the entire front of the woods and on the left and rear of Hansbrough's position the troops of Bogkin formed their line of battle at the top of the ridge.¹⁸ The rest of the



companies, the 52nd Virginia and the 12th Georgia, were ordered to create a rudimentary trench line in the hill behind the Yeager farmhouse, and above them lay eight guns to defend the summit. All three roads, which converged at the top of Allegheny Mountain, were firmly in Confederate hands.

The troops on the ridge waited about two hours in the harsh winter cold until they met the enemy. Johnson later reported that the official time of battle began at 7:15 a.m.¹⁹ Hansbrough's scouts were the first to spot a force of Union soldiers making their way along the ridge to the far right. Hansbrough met the Union troops at a distance of 150 yards and fired upon them. One soldier wrote, "Just as we reached the top, the enemy rose right in our front—it seemed to me not twenty feet away—and gave us a volley, which so demoralized a portion of our command . . . they left the field. . . . The balance took to the trees, and it became a regular bush-whacking fight."²⁰ The Confederates were pushed back by the Union; yet in falling back, Hansbrough's men rallied with the 31st and forced the Union men back into the woods. Back and forth the contest raged; if the Confederates charged against the Union, the Union quickly returned the favor. The Confederate ranks were in great disorder and yet they held a rough defense.

William Frey wrote on 15 December 1861, that

Just before dawn of day on the 13th, the enemy fired upon our pickets and then pickets soon came to camp [and] let it be known. Almost at an instant our forces were drawn out and went to attack the Yankees. But by that time the Yankees were a hundred yards of our camp already formed in a line of battle, and began to fire upon us. Col. Johnson, who is chief commander of our force, took a club in his hand and said to his men, "Come on my brave boys." At that they became terrible as tigers and fought worse than a flock of bloodthirsty wolves. I never saw men fight worse than tigers in my life.²¹

Indeed, it was Johnson's daring command that turned the tide of battle in favor of the Confederates. Seeing that the right flank was in grave danger due to the large number of Federals against the 300 or so Confederates defending directly under Bogkin's command since the wounding of Hansbrough, Johnson took action quickly to direct the failing defense. Making his way through the timber, Johnson grabbed a stick to direct his men. Though his appearance must have been odd-looking to his men, they gained courage at the sight of their fearless commander leading them. Fighting bravely, the Confederates regained the



field and forced the Union troops to retreat back to Cheat Mountain.²²

Johnson congratulated his troops upon their success at the Battle of Camp Allegheny in issuing this statement:

It affords me great pleasure to congratulate the troops, officers, and men of this command upon the victory achieved by them over the enemy on the 13th. With a force not exceeding twelve or fifteen hundred you repulsed the enemy numbered in not quite 5,000. Attacked by superior numbers on your right, where there were no entrenchments, and on your left, where we had put partly constructed earthworks, you met him, and in a hand-to-hand conflict, after a struggle of nearly seven (7) hours, drove him from the field. Not once did you falter. Cheered on and animated by the heroic examples of your officers, you drove the enemy from the summit of Allegheny back. . . . While we [have] abundant cause to thank God for this victory, let us not forget the gallant dead who fell by our sides and whom we buried on Allegheny. Remember their gallantry and emulate their example.²³

Regardless of the victory and praise from their commanding officer, the Frey brothers were not any more enthusiastic about the Confederate cause or their duty after the battle than they were before the encounter. Writing from Camp Allegheny on 16 February 1862, Joseph Frey noted:

One could not imagine what the duty of a soldier is until one experiences it. Our officers are now attempting to persuade us to enlist for the war. They now offer a furlough of sixty days and a bond of fifty dollars. But that does not seem to have much impression. . . . When we volunteered, we were promised furloughs every three months, and if not then a furlough would not fail to be given at the expiration of six months. . . . No furloughs yet."²⁴

A few months later, after Joseph had made his thoughts and opinions clear about re-enlisting on voluntary grounds, he also took note of conscription with much disdain. On 17 March 1862, Joseph Frey wrote to his sister and father that, "It is rumored here that they are going to press us in service next year, though I think they will be completely mistaken. I for one will see home at the end of my time. I don't care whether they discharge me or not; I am coming home."²⁵ In that same letter Joseph Frey wrote that,

The southern cause is certainly in a precarious condition. The Yankees, it is said, have full possession of Winchester and are still advancing up the valley. If that report be true, they doubtless will be in Staunton before long, and then we here at Allegheny would be



[entirely] cut off from our supply and we would then have to fight or surrender. I have also heard that the militia have gone to the assistance of Gen. Jackson unarmed. I think that it is the most foolish thing that could be done: taking a force unarmed to meet an army, and leaving you entirely by yourself. I do hope that this war will soon terminate.²⁶

The turmoil of the Frey family did not end with the trials of Camp Allegheny. The hopes of a quick resolution to the bloody conflict were nothing more than dreams, and the intentions of leaving the turmoil of a soldier's life were nothing more than intentions. Yet it would seem that duty held a deeper root within Joseph Frey than he was willing to admit. In his participation in the Battle of Spotsylvania Court House more than two years later, his tribulations proved to be even greater than they were under the command of Ed "Allegheny" Johnson.

The Spotsylvania Courthouse campaign lasted from roughly from 8 May to 21 May 1864. The severity of the bloody conflict should come as no surprise with such determined leaders as Union General Ulysses S. Grant and Confederate General Robert E. Lee in command. Prior to the Spotsylvania Courthouse campaign both Grant and Lee would clash in the Wilderness. Under the cover of darkness on 3 May, Grant took his Army of the Potomac across the Rapidan River, and, without resistance from Lee, camped in the Wilderness, a conglomeration of trees and swamp so thick that little daylight could penetrate. Grant had no desire to fight under such conditions, but Lee allowed him to travel more deeply into the Wilderness via the river, hoping that once Grant landed, he would be delivered into the hands of the Confederates, who knew every inch of their own land. However, on 5 May, the two commanders clashed in battle. The Confederates had only half as many men as the Federals. The Army of Northern Virginia held 62,000 men and the Army of the Potomac was at the strength of 120,000, but the Confederate knowledge of the land and the uselessness of Union artillery in the thick growth evened the fight. In the end, the Union losses in the Wilderness numbered 17,666. Under such heavy assault, Grant, refusing to retreat, made his way by night for the left of his position and headed toward Spotsylvania Courthouse.²⁷ Joseph Frey wrote to his father and sister on 8 May 1864, that

This is the fifth day of battle. I am still shielded by the mercies of a kind providence. We have had the engagement with the enemy that is our brigade. Our loss is not great as of yet. We had the

My Dear Bro Camp Alleghany Dec 15th 61
Why dont you write. I have
written to you three or four weeks ago
but I have not gotten an answer.
I want you to write immediately and
let me know whether you got that
money I sent by Mr Buffum. I am
desirous of hearing from you.
I must now give you a little
statement of the awful contest
which took place on the 13th. I suppose
you have heard ~~that~~ about the
battle took place here. Just before
the dawn of day on the 13th the enemy
fired upon our pickets and the
pickets soon came to to Camp &
let it be known. Almost at an instant
our forces were drawn out and
went to attack the Yankees. But
by that time the Yankees were in a
hundred yards of our camp already
formed in a line of battle, and began
to fire upon us. Col Johnston who
is chief commander of our force
took a club in his hand & said to
his men come on my brave boys
at that they became terrible as tigers
and they fought worse than a flock
of blood-thirsty wolves. I never saw
men fight worse than ~~these~~ in

A letter from one of the Frey brothers, found in the Hamrick Collection of the Augusta County Historical Society archives.



advantage of breast-works in two engagements which resulted in great slaughter on the enemy's part. Our Regt. [Regiment] up to this time has lost about 25 killed and wounded. . . . A man by the name of Hanger [who] was one of my messmates was supposed to have been taken prisoner. All the boys of our neighborhood [belonging] to our camp are unhurt. We have had some [severe] marching [and] very little sleep. Yesterday, which was Sunday, we marched about thirteen miles and did not reach this ground until late at night. We are one mile from Spotsylvania Court House.²⁸

The Confederates believed that they would have certain victory fighting in their own land. The past had proven it to be so. Most Union commanders would have fallen back and there was no reason to believe that General Grant would not follow suit in the manner of his predecessors. Not willing to risk the chance of Grant's retreat, Lee sent a portion of his forces to cut off any Federal advance upon Spotsylvania and, by the morning of 8 May, Lee's men would confront the Union flanking column. Grant flung his forces against the Confederate entrenchments time and time again upon the grounds of Spotsylvania Courthouse. Yet the entrenchments defended by muskets and artillery quadrupled the Confederates' strength. The results were dangerous for the Federal troops: Grant's losses from the Rapidan River to the James River between the dates of the battles in the Wilderness, Spotsylvania Courthouse and Cold Harbor (The total length of these campaigns would be from May 4 to June 12) equaled roughly the same number of men as General Lee held in his entire army: 54,926.²⁹

It was battles such as Spotsylvania Courthouse that turned boys into men. The trials of camp life and the burdens of war seasoned the soldiers of the South, hardened many of them, and changed their lives forever. Doubtless the Frey brothers gave their blood and sweat for the southern cause out of a sense of duty, and they answered that duty with reservation and determination at the same time. From Camp Allegheny to the battles of Spotsylvania, the life of the common soldier can be seen through the eyes of the Frey brothers.

The story of the Frey brothers is not as clear as one would hope after the conclusion of the war. There is record of Joseph Frey making a claim for amends due to the deceased William H. Frey on 15 August 1862. The cause of Williams's death is not known. The 1870 U.S. Census of Augusta County does not show any Frey as being accounted for. What happened to them may never be known.



Endnotes

¹Joseph Frey to an unnamed brother, 16 February 1862. Letter. From the Augusta County Historical Society, The Hamrick Collection, Hamrick-Frey papers.

²Sun Tzu, *The Art of War* (New York: Barnes & Noble Classics, 2003), 19.

³Gregg S. Clemmer, *Old Allegheny : The Life an Wars of General Ed Johnson* (Staunton: Hearthside Publishing Company, 2004), 355.

⁴Ibid., 340.

⁵Ibid., 347.

⁶A reply of an unnamed Frey brother to a letter written by Joseph Frey, 16 February 1862. Letter. From the Augusta County Historical Society, The Hamrick Collection, Hamrick-Frey papers.

⁷Clemmer, *Old Allegheny*, 349.

⁸Bell Irvin Wiley, *The Life of Jonny Reb* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978), 90.

⁹Joseph Frey to his father and sister, 17 March 1862. Letter. From the Augusta County Historical Society, The Hamrick Collection, Hamrick-Frey papers.

¹⁰Wiley, *The Life of Jonny Reb*, 108.

¹¹Ibid., 109.

¹²Unnamed Frey brother to his father and sister, 8 September 1861. Letter. From the Augusta County Historical Society, The Hamrick Collection, Hamrick-Frey papers.

¹³Samuel Frey to his Father and Sister, 21 November. Letter. From the Augusta County Historical Society, The Hamrick Collection, Hamrick-Frey papers.

¹⁴William Frey to his Father and Sister, 17 March 1862. Letter. From the Augusta County Historical Society, The Hamrick Collection, Hamrick-Frey papers.

¹⁵Joseph Frey to his sick brother, 26 July 1862. Letter. From the Augusta County Historical Society, The Hamrick Collection, Hamrick-Frey papers.

¹⁶Joseph Frey to an unnamed brother, 11 August 1862. Letter. From the Augusta County Historical Society, The Hamrick Collection, Hamrick-Frey papers.

¹⁷Clemmer, *Old Allegheny*, 356.

¹⁸Ibid., 356.

¹⁹Ibid., 356-357.

²⁰Ibid., 357.

²¹William Frey to Samuel Frey, 15 December 1861. Letter. From the Augusta County Historical Society, The Hamrick Collection, Hamrick-Frey papers.

²²Clemmer, *Old Allegheny*, 360.

²³Ibid., 367.

²⁴Joseph Frey to an unnamed brother, 16 February 1862. Letter. From the Augusta County Historical Society, The Hamrick Collection, Hamrick-Frey papers.

²⁵Joseph Frey to his father and sister, 17 March 1862. Letter. From the Augusta County Historical Society, The Hamrick Collection, Hamrick-Frey papers.

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷James Ford Rhodes, *History of the Civil War 1861-1865* (Mineola: Dover Publications, 1999) 306-308

²⁸Joseph Frey to his father and sister, 8 May 1864, Letter. From the Augusta County Historical Society, The Hamrick Collection, Hamrick-Frey papers.

²⁹Rhodes, *History of the Civil War*, 309-312.



Was the wrong man hanged in Staunton in 1854?

by David McGuire Trayer

The *Augusta Historical Bulletin*, Volume 46, 2010, carried an article, "The Trial of Hemphill Trayer," concerning a trial and subsequent execution that occurred in Staunton in 1853-1854. Andrew Hemphill Trayer of Staunton was found guilty by a Commonwealth jury and sentenced to be hanged. He was executed in Staunton on 6 January 1854. The case involved the murder of an old man, William Coleman, who was found bludgeoned to death in his home. The judge, Lucas P. Thompson, admitted that all trial evidence was circumstantial and that, if he had been a juror, he would have been reluctant to find Trayer guilty. Other details of the case also cast uncertainty over the prisoner's guilt.

A recently discovered article in the *Augusta County Argus and Staunton Siftings* newspaper, Tuesday, June 2, 1896, page 3, suggests that Trayer might have indeed been innocent.

Hung the Wrong Man at Staunton

On January 6, 1854, Hemphill Trayer, a butcher, was hung here in Staunton for the murder of Wm. Coleman, an old man, in August, 1853. He and a man named Perkins and Jas. Wilson were arrested charged with the murder. Perkins turned state's evidence and perjured himself in testifying that Trayer did the murder and that from a certain point he saw it through a window. The jury were taken to the point and the man's statement that Coleman's room could be seen from it was verified. It was a great trial, with large crowds attending and the ablest lawyers employed on both sides. A hammer or hatchet known to have been the butcher's property was found in the dead man's room, where it had been left by the real murderer and this formed a very strong link in the chain of circumstantial evidence that wound itself around the innocent butcher and landed him on the scaffold. A good many people believed the condemned man innocent and he protested to the last moment that he was innocent.

It now turns out after 42 years have been rolled up in the past that Hemp Trayer was hung for the crime committed by a man named Culloway, a notorious character who belonged to a gang of Kentucky outlaws credited with many robberies and shady transactions. A copy of the *Blade*, published at Portsmouth, Ohio, received



here last week gives an account of the murder and the confession of Meredith Workman, who was confined in the Kentucky penitentiary for burglary, who says he and Culloway went to Coleman's house for the purpose of robbing him and when he refused to give up his money Culloway struck him on the head, killing him.

Living in Staunton are many descendants of the Trayer family of over forty years ago who have all this time lived under the shame and disgrace of their ancestor's having been hung for murder. At length they have the assurance that is said to be fully credited where it comes from that Hemp Trayer died an innocent man.

Further investigation is being pursued.



Senator Stephen A. Douglas' very modern campaign swing through the Valley in early September 1860

by Daniel A. Métraux, Mary Baldwin College

The largest crowd in Staunton history, said to be three thousand strong, murmured in anticipation as the train from Charlottesville pulled into the station. The rail trip over the Blue Ridge had been like a great procession as hundreds of excited and curious Virginians had gathered at each depot to cheer the great patriot and statesman on board. The nation faced its greatest crisis and most important election ever in 1860 and the most famous politician in the land had come to assure them that he was the one leader who could unite the country and save the young Republic from the tragedy of civil war.

Stephen A. Douglas (1813-1861), a native of Vermont who had moved to Illinois in 1833 and had rapidly become a Congressman and Senator from that state, stepped off the train to the cheers from the crowd. Douglas saw himself as a great defender of the Union and preached the idea of "popular sovereignty" as the one way to resolve the crisis facing the nation—the conflicting desire of many Southerners to spread their slave-based economy to the new territories in the West and the resolve of the newly-formed Republican Party to contain this way of life to areas where it already existed. Douglas firmly believed in the concept of democracy and declared that it should be up to the people of each territory to decide the economic direction of their home.

When Douglas dismounted the train, he was escorted by an honor guard, the Staunton Artillery, led by the unit's captain, John Imboden (1823-1895), a lawyer and local politician who later became a prominent Confederate general. William Harman (1828-1865), a leading Waynesboro-based businessman and planter, introduced Douglas to the crowd, telling the Senator that "To you, sir, all eyes are turned." He



added that the people of the Valley of Virginia were counting on Douglas to “roll back the swelling tide of sectionalism and fanaticism which threatens to engulf them,” in order to preserve “this magnificent republican edifice reared by our fathers.”¹

Douglas received loud cheers from the crowd, but presented a modest, almost humble, stance in his short speech. He said that he came not as a partisan candidate, but as a person who would, if he could, heal the wounds that had traumatized the nation. He told them that he was “not courting votes for the presidency.” If people only had enough sense to put down both of the sectional parties that were doing so much to threaten the perpetuity of the nation and go further to “rebuke” the fanaticism of both the North and the South, he did not care whom they made their next President.

Douglas went on to remind the crowd that he had traveled throughout the North and the South, that he knew and admired the nation, and inferred that this background and understanding would make him the ideal leader to save the nation.²

After his speech Douglas went by carriage to the home of Michael G. Harman, a wealthy Staunton businessman who owned a hotel and ran a stagecoach line in the city. While there he received several hundred visitors and was serenaded by Turner’s Cornet Band. After spending the night in Staunton, Douglas moved on to Harrisonburg to further his campaign.

The Staunton-based newspaper the *Republican Vindicator*, which strongly supported Douglas, reported on the Senator’s campaign stop in Harrisonburg in its September 7, 1860 issue:

We accompanied Judge Douglas to Harrisonburg, and heard him deliver a masterly speech to a very large and enthusiastic audience on last Monday. Although it was raining and the day was damp and disagreeable, the Court House was crowded. He vindicated in a clear, concise and satisfactory manner, the position occupied by the Democratic Party, his own fidelity to the Constitution and laws, and his perfect submission in all cases to the decisions of the Supreme Court. He contended that although that tribunal might make a decision distasteful to him, yet, as an honest man, respecting the dignity of American citizenship, he could not and would not fail to render implicit obedience to the result of its action. Throughout, his remarks were characterized by a degree of candor, frankness, honesty and nationality, which won the admiration of all. A number of persons heretofore the avowed supporters of Mr. Breckinridge, came out unhesitatingly and fully for Douglas. We have never known a more favorable impression to be made



than that created by the speech and presence of Judge Douglas in Harrisonburg. Those who had charged him with being an abolitionist, found that no man breathes, who is more fully committed in sentiment and action to the maintenance of the rights of all the States alike, or who more indignantly denounces and repudiates any abridgement of or interference with the rights of each individual and State of the Union. He made these prepositions clear and satisfactory to every impartial mind, and opened the eyes of many who had heretofore opposed him because of a misapprehension of his views and position.

Douglas' visits to Staunton and Harrisonburg were part of a very unusual campaign strategy for nineteenth century America. Today a major candidate for President must spend at least two years campaigning hard across the country in order to secure his or her party's nomination and to run in the fall election. While the campaign requires a huge campaign organization and millions of dollars, the candidates must be in perpetual motion in full campaign mode. This tradition is markedly different from the nineteenth century mode of campaigning when candidates and nominees did very little campaigning on their own. While their surrogates organized campaigns across the country, the candidates stayed quietly at home, giving occasional speeches and corresponding with supporters, but not venturing out much on their own. William McKinley was famous for his front porch campaign of 1896 when delegations of supporters would come to his home in Canton, Ohio, to hear about the benefits of "sound money" and high tariffs. Even Abraham Lincoln remained close to home in Springfield, Illinois, as his operatives, notably Senator William Henry Seward, organized his campaign across the North.

Senator Stephen Douglas of Illinois, the candidate of a badly split Democratic Party in 1860, tried a different strategy. Although he knew that he had little chance to win any states in the Deep South, he waged a vigorous, very modern style campaign that took him to virtually every region of the country. In so doing Douglas was one of the first candidates to abandon the "stay at home" strategy. Ultimately his strategy failed as he acquired only twelve electoral votes from New Jersey and Missouri, but he ran well against Lincoln in a number of northern states where a shift of only a few votes would have brought greater electoral vote rewards.

What benefits did the campaign bring Douglas?

It is interesting to ask what benefits Douglas reaped from his visit to the Valley. It is clear that while voters in the Staunton-Augusta region strongly supported the tradition of slavery. Although they thought of slaves



as personal private property and had no affection for abolitionists, they strongly supported the idea of remaining in the Union. Slaves were a major component of the economic engine that drove prosperity in the Valley. They felt that the federal government had no right to meddle with their personal property. They stressed that the Constitution expressly forbade the Federal government from interfering with the rights of citizens in slave states to own slaves. As long as Virginia remained in the Union, the people of the Valley could go on maintaining their peaceful lives, but secession could well mean war and an invasion of the Valley by federal troops who could bring an end to slavery and the traditional way of life in the Valley. Local voters strongly opposed the secessionists of the Deep South because they advocated policies that would bring war, which might be largely fought in border region states like Virginia.

The election brought forth four major candidates with distinctly different views concerning the future direction of the nation. The Republican candidate, Abraham Lincoln of Illinois, was a firm supporter of the concept of a strong union who opposed any expansion of slavery and any further concessions to southern interests. Illinois senator Stephen Douglas was a strong supporter of the Union and of the concept of popular sovereignty. Vice-President John Breckinridge represented more radical southern interests who demanded the right to expand slavery to any new territory that wished to entertain statehood. A grouping of less extreme southerners backed the candidacy of former Whig Senator and House Speaker John Bell of Tennessee under the helm of the new Constitutional Union Party. Bell was a wealthy slave owner, but he and his chief supporters supported the retention of the Union above everything else. They felt that the best way out of the crisis facing the country was to take no stand at all on the major issues that divided north and south.

Lincoln's victory was made possible when the still-dominant Democratic Party split between northern and southern factions. Douglas was the leading Democratic candidate at the party's opening convention, but many southern delegates did not trust Douglas to be a firm supporter of slavery. His idea of popular sovereignty could lead to the expansion of slavery to some territories, but it could also lead to its rejection as was ultimately the case in Kansas. Ultimately the southern wing of the Democratic Party nominated Vice-President Breckinridge while the northern faction dutifully chose Douglas



The presidential race was really two separate races in the North and the South. The North featured a heated race between Lincoln and Douglas that in the end was won by Lincoln. The South featured a three-way race between Douglas, Bell and Breckinridge. The Vice-President did very well in the Deep South taking such states as Texas with three-quarters of the vote. The farther north one went, however, the closer the vote was between Bell and Breckinridge. Douglas ran reasonably well across the South, but usually came in a distant third.

Virginia provided a real microcosm of the election in the South and was a true battleground state. Eastern and southern portions of the state favored Breckinridge while western Virginia provided a strong vote base for Bell and a good turnout for Douglas. The race statewide was extremely close with Bell gaining a narrow victory:

Bell	74,481
Breckinridge	74,325
Douglas	16,198
Lincoln	1,887 ³

The Breckinridge campaign had high hopes of carrying Virginia and knew that it had to win votes in the Valley if it was to do well in Virginia overall. Breckinridge sent a surrogate, William Lownes Yancey of Alabama, a firebrand secessionist, to win Valley support. The *Vindicator*, speaking for many Valley voters, lashed out at Yancey, who received a much smaller and subdued reception from Stauntonians. The paper decried Yancey's ignorance of life in the Valley whose citizens remained committed both to slavery and to its ties to the Union. "Mr. Yancey, when down in Alabama, remote from the 'slave depopulated' border State of old Virginia (all bosh—we have more slaves now than we had ten years ago) can write his disunion manifestoes." Yancey and Breckinridge could not understand the subtlety of the situation in a border area like Virginia. Like Lincoln and the Republicans in the North, they thought only in terms of opposites and not in the shifting shades of gray that enveloped the slaveholding Unionist South.⁴ If Douglas had been the only "Unionist" candidate contesting votes in the Valley, he might have done

very well, but ultimately many Unionist Valley voters supported fellow southerner John Bell. He was a wealthy southerner and slaveholder who also talked in terms of preserving the Union. Ultimately Douglas was a northerner, his popular sovereignty policy had failed in Kansas, and he showed no great enthusiasm for slavery. Bell also stood for the Union, but his southern roots and slaveholding experience made him a safer haven for Valley voters. Douglas did well, but Bell carried the region:

Bell	2,553
Douglas	1,094
Breckinridge	218 ⁵

An interesting side note to this story is the fact that the Valley had to wait 148 years until another major party candidate campaigned there. Barack Obama received a huge welcome in Harrisonburg just before the 2008 election.

Endnotes

¹ Quoted in Edward L. Ayers, *In the Presence of Mine Enemies: War in the Heart of America, 1859-1863* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2003), 69.
² *Ibid.*, 70.
³ <http://uselectionatlas.org/RESULTS/state.php?year=1860&fips=51&f=0&off=0&elect=0> (Accessed 6 August 2012).
⁴ *Republican Vindicator*, October 5, 1860.
⁵ Ayers, 80.



The history of the Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind

by Faithlyn Robinson, VSDB staff member

Editor's Note: Faithlyn Robinson, a teacher at the Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind, presented the program for the Augusta County Historical Society's Spring Meeting on March 27, 2011. The meeting, held in the VSDB Chapel, featured a documentary CD compiled by Ms. Robinson. This paper is a synopsis of that CD.

What do nine governors, three presidents, three superintendents, three deaf men, two blind men, a doctor, a lady, a couple, and a former slave have in common? The answer to their shared connection is the Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind in Staunton, Virginia.

In 1812, there was an attempt to establish an institution for the deaf at Cobbs Plantation near Petersburg, Virginia, by Col. William Bolling, a descendant of John Rolfe and Pocahontas. The institution was to be conducted by John Braidwood but the school closed in 1816 due to mismanagement.¹ In 1825, Virginia Governor James Pleasant was the first person to ask the General Assembly for a school for the deaf. It failed due to a lack of information about whether or not there were enough deaf children in Virginia to warrant opening a school for them. Not long after that, Governor William B. Giles became the second person to ask the General Assembly for a school for the deaf. Again, it failed to pass into law.²

Dr. Lewis W. Chamberlayne and Rev. William Swan Plumer were the most active in pushing the Virginia General Assembly of 1838 to pass a bill establishing a school for the deaf and the blind. Finally, on March 31, 1838, the General Assembly passed the bill and established Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind (VSDB). VSDB became the first school in America to integrate deaf and blind students.³

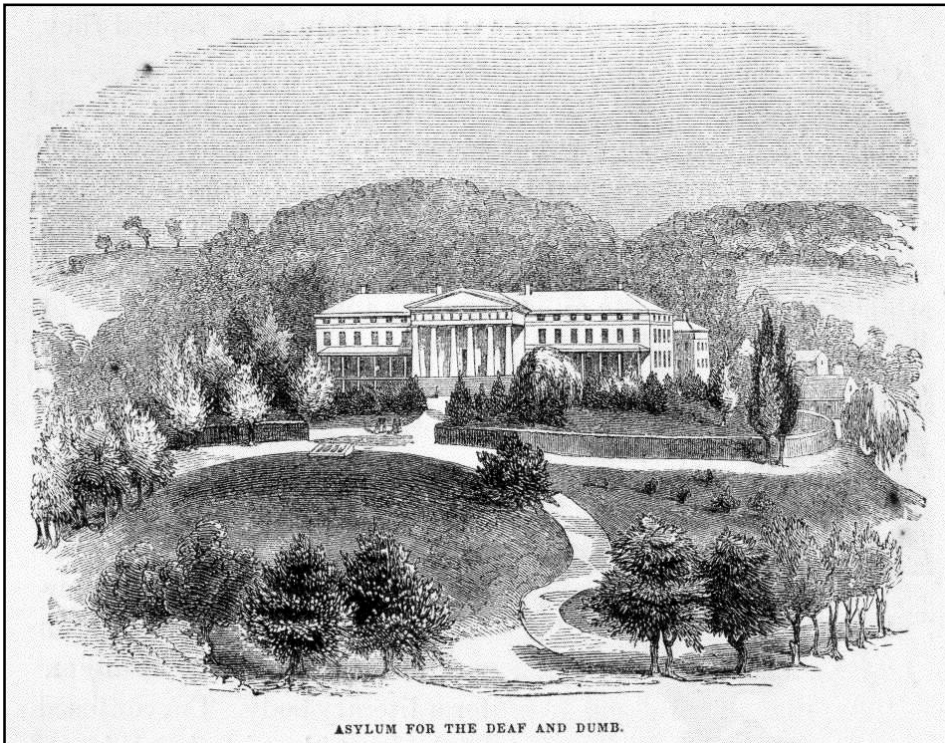
After exploring several locations to establish VSDB, the board of visitors unanimously accepted an offer from James Bell of some beautiful property near Staunton, Virginia, for the location of the school. Bell,



of Augusta County, donated five acres of land for the school site. It was a mile east of Staunton.⁴

On May 6, 1839, the school's first board of visitors held its organizational meeting. Rev. Joseph Dennis Tyler became the first principal for the Deaf Department. He was the first and, to date, the only deaf superintendent of VSDB. Dr. Jean Charles Martin Merillat (a medical doctor) became the first principal of the Blind Department. Just over a decade later, when Tyler suddenly got sick and died on January 29, 1852, Dr. Merillat became the principal of both departments. Since that time, VSDB has appointed only one principal or superintendent to oversee both portions of the school.⁵

VSDB officially opened on November 15, 1839. The first student was Elizabeth Baker, a deaf girl who was admitted into VSDB on November 30, 1839. Two days later the second student, Robert Foley, a deaf boy, was admitted on December 2, 1839. Sixteen days later the first blind student, Minerva Wooddy was admitted on December 18, 1839. The first blind male student, Henry J. Gray, was admitted into VSDB in January 1840.⁶ Two years later, the first deaf male student, Robert Foley



An early view of the Asylum for the Deaf and Blind showing Main Hall.



died while in school. The board of visitors paid for his burial and buried him at Trinity Church in downtown, Staunton.⁷

When the school opened in 1839, the first campus building had not been completed so classes did not meet at what is today's VSDB campus. While the school's first two buildings, the vocational building and Main Hall, were being built, school was held in a frame building near the area where the railroad was built decades later. School officials realized that the building was too small to fully function as a school. They decided to separate the deaf and blind departments temporarily. VSDB found a warehouse for housing blind students on West Main Street. For the deaf department, VSDB found housing on the northwest corner of Augusta Street and Johnson Street.⁸ The school rented two buildings in town late in 1839 after it opened on November 15 of that year. On January 1, 1840, two pupils were reported in each department.

Hopes were high when the cornerstone for the initial building was laid. "The Virginia Institution for the Deaf and Dumb and the Blind—A notable monument of philanthropy, raised by intelligence for intelligence; though her inmates be dumb to speak their emotions, or blind to the grandeur and sublimity of nature, yet they have the hearts that can swell and thoughts that can soar." These words were actually spoken on July 9, 1840, following the cornerstone laying ceremony of the "Virginia Institution for the Deaf and Dumb and the Blind," now known as the Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind. The statement of July 9 was made at the twelfth toast out of twenty-three toasts at the dinner on the site of the ceremony. James McDowell did the oration.⁹ Later that year, the first vocational building was complete and students immediately began being trained in vocational work.¹⁰

VSDB's main building, known as Main Hall, was under construction in 1840. By March 28, 1846, a newspaper article revealed that at least a portion of the building was complete and in use. "The Eastern wing of the beautiful edifice designed for the accommodation of this Institution is now completed and taken possession of by the Blind. The other wing (for the Mutes) is expected to be ready by the fall."¹¹

Later in the year, the newspaper contained more comments about the nearly completed Main Hall on October 8, 1846: "...a beautiful Portico ornamented by six fluted columns of the Doric order, and of two wings, each with a piazza, ten feet wide, for the exercise of the pupils..."¹² The elegant building was made of bricks and stood four stories high. The prominent architect, Robert Cary Long, designed Main Hall.¹³



Main Hall in 1860.

More utilitarian buildings were soon added. In 1849, the building containing the bake house, laundry, drying rooms, and servants' room was completed. In 1852, the boiler house was erected on the east side of Main Hall.¹⁴

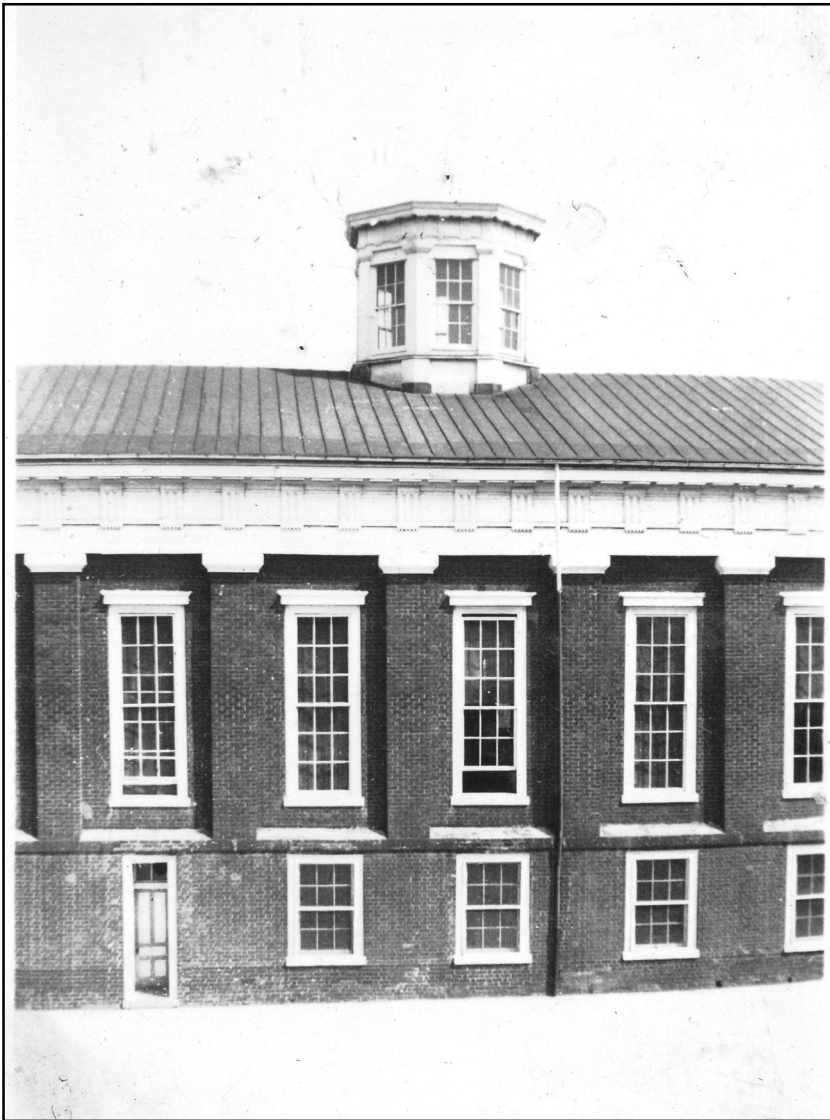
By 1853 the chapel was under construction and was completed in 1855. The pipe organs were placed there after the construction. For many years people from the town came to hear the organ playing during the services, ceremonies, and programs. The beautiful pipe organs were torn down in 1949. The chapel is now located behind Main Hall.¹⁵

In 1858, the first vocational building was destroyed by fire. About 3 o' clock a.m. on October 26, 1858, the shop building (first vocational building) was discovered to be on fire. Some school records were destroyed. Arson was suspected but the culprit was never caught. In 1859, the second vocational building was erected.¹⁶

In 1861, Civil War broke out in America. The state of Virginia became a Confederate State and VSDB came under the control of the Confederate government. The war affected everyone including VSDB. Virginia Governor John Letcher issued an order to move the seventy-eight students from VSDB, despite the superintendents' protests, to Virginia Female Institute (now Stuart Hall) so that the school could become a hospital.¹⁷



The move was controversial for both schools. “Mr. Covell, in the meantime, acting upon authority of the Board, tried to pay the Virginia Female Institute the sum of \$3,160 for rent of its building from July 1861, to October, 1863, at the rate of \$1,440 per year set by the assessors. This payment was declined by the girls’ school on the grounds that its buildings were taken without warrant of law, and were held against its consent, and it was unwilling to do anything which would place it in the position of recognizing the Virginia School for the Deaf and Blind as tenants.”¹⁸



VSDB Chapel.



VSDB was surrendered to the Confederacy for the purpose of a military hospital. The Chapel became the operating room while the basement of Main Hall became the morgue. Wounded soldiers stayed in Main Hall and the Chapel. Many soldiers were brought in and some that died there were buried on the school grounds. VSDB Superintendent Dr. Jean Merillat, who was also a medical doctor, became the surgeon for the hospital with the approval of the board of visitors. Thus, Dr. Merillat could perform his medical duties while keeping a close eye on the grounds of his school to prevent damage. Eventually Dr. Merillat resigned as principal of VSDB to take up military duties. His brother-in-law, Major John Collins Covell, became the second principal of VSDB.¹⁹

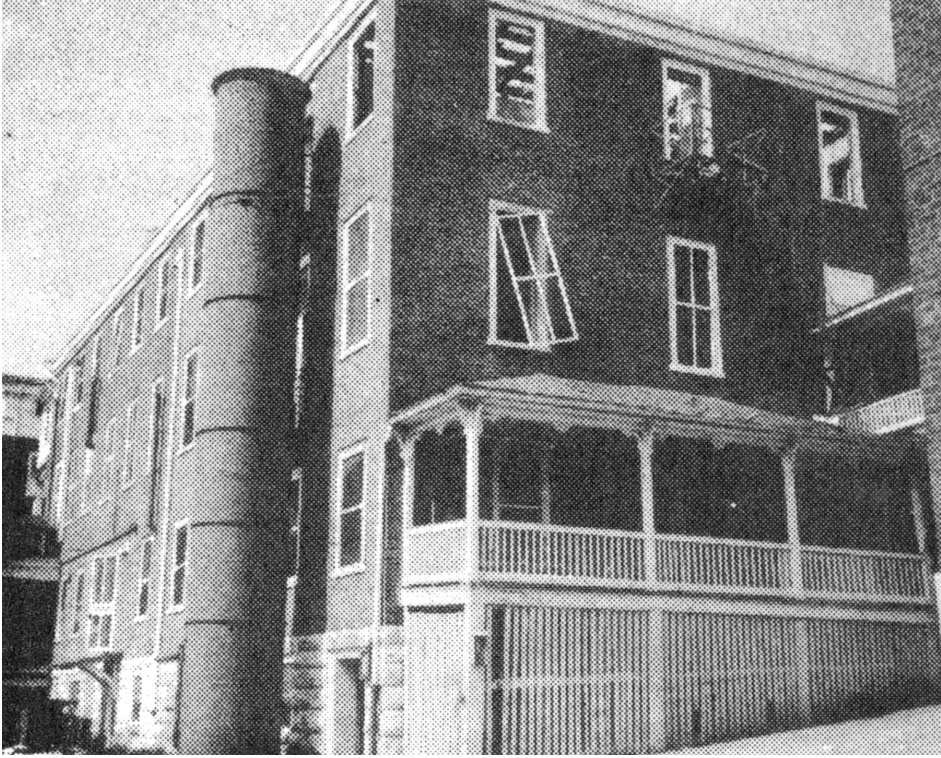
The seventy-eight students stayed at Virginia Female Institute while the war raged on. Few students were able to go home. Staunton was invaded by Northern soldiers but was lucky to escape significant damages and fire.²⁰

After the Civil War the pupils and staff returned to Main Hall and occupied the grounds. Right after the Civil War the state of Virginia was so poor that students had to bring their own living supplies to school. This school had poor food, no heat in the dormitories, the pupils had to sleep on iron beds without springs, and the only mattresses were made by the blind students in the school's shop. They had no chairs in the dining room and they had to use stools and boxes, which were made in the school shop. This situation continued for years.²¹

The separation of West Virginia from Virginia during the war affected VSDB because some of its students were from the newly formed state that remained in the Union. West Virginia established its own school for the Deaf and the Blind in Romney, West Virginia. Professor H.H. Johnson, a blind man, was instrumental in the establishment of the West Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind. Ironically, he had attended VSDB.²²

In 1871, Captain Charles D. McCoy became the third principal of the school. In 1876, the dining hall/infirmiry building was erected. It consisted of a kitchen on the first floor, dining room on the second floor, and infirmary on the third floor. A house for the kitchen staff was also built. It was located across from the dining hall. In 1876, new gates were placed at the entrance of the institution and in 1877, VSDB put new iron railing around the pond in the courtyard.²³

In 1880, a threat against VSDB emerged. In Milan, Italy, an international conference of deaf educators convened. They passed a resolution



The Dining Hall, exterior, top, and interior.



Montague Hall



Tyler Hall



banning sign language. That single event greatly impacted the lives of the deaf population around the world.²⁴ It almost destroyed sign language. VSDB resisted and allowed sign language.²⁵

From the year 1879 to 1884, VSDB went through a series of principals. During those six years, VSDB had four different principals. The reason for this is unknown. The fourth principal, Leonidas Poyntz, A.B., only served one year from 1879 to 1880. The fifth superintendent, Captain Thomas Doyle, only served from 1880 to 1882. Unfortunately the trend continued with the sixth principal, Dr. William Ryland Vaugh, M.D., A.M., who served only from 1882 to 1883. That trend persisted even with the seventh principal, Charles S. Roller, serving from 1883 to 1884. The trend finally broke when the eighth principal, Captain Thomas Doyle, returned and served from 1884 to 1896.

In 1896, the beloved ninth principal, William A. Boyles, began his service that lasted from 1896 to 1919. His twenty-three years represent the longest term of any principal in VSDB history.²⁶

In 1898, the tradition of naming new campus buildings after Virginia governors began. It started with Governor James Hoge Tyler. Tyler Hall, the residential dormitory for the blind boys was erected in 1898.²⁷ In 1902 another governor's name came to rest on the VSDB campus when Montague Hall, the dormitory for blind girls, was named after Governor Andrew Jackson Montague.²⁸

Beside the goal of educating deaf students and blind students, VSDB wanted to be self-sufficient. The school established a dairy in 1906. The school's milk was so good that it won many blue ribbons and other awards.²⁹

In 1907, for the Jamestown Exposition, Ruben Weaver and his class constructed a large colonial dollhouse. They won first place! The dollhouse is still in the Virginia School for the Deaf Museum.³⁰

In 1908, VSDB's sister school for black students was erected in Newport News, Virginia, by William Ritter, a graduate of VSDB in Staunton. It was a successful move because the state of Virginia realized the critical need for a school for the deaf and blind black children. Ritter was the first superintendent of the school.³¹

At the same time, a new building was erected on the Staunton campus. Swanson Hall was named for Virginia Governor Charles Swanson. In 1909, VSDB erected a bridge to connect four buildings – Swanson, Tyler, Main, and Montague). The VSDB students built the bridge. In 1911, the pond in the courtyard was covered in concrete. One hundred square



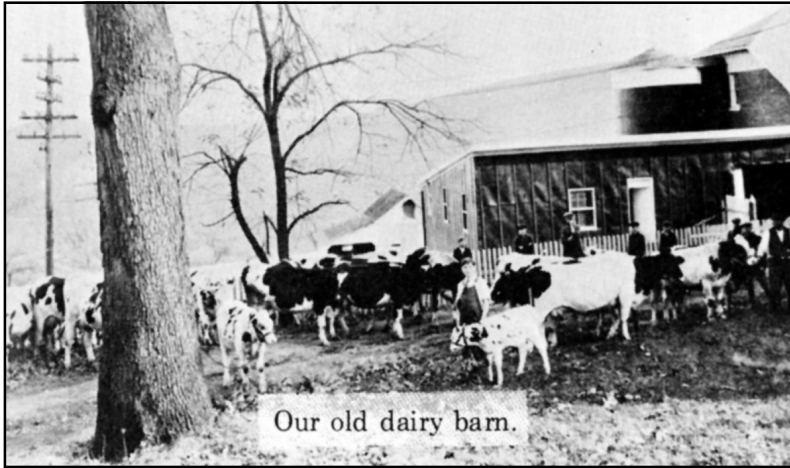
The covered bridge.

yards of concrete were put down on the courtyard between Swanson and Main Hall. A pavilion was erected there as well. The second vocational building was torn down in 1914 and the new vocational building (the third one) was erected and again, another governor honored. The building was named after Henry Carter Stuart.³²

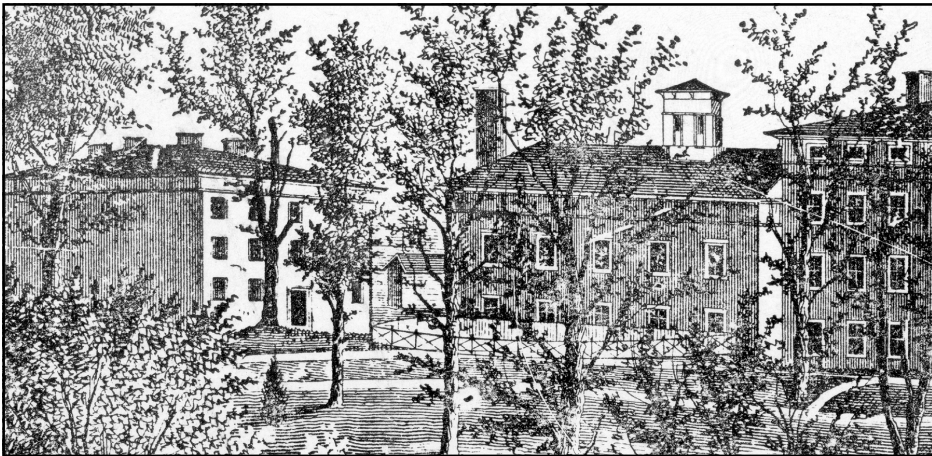
In 1919, Howard M. McManaway became the tenth superintendent of the school. Unfortunately for the deaf students and teachers at the school, McManaway embraced the Milan Resolution and banned sign language. For the next twenty years, deaf students suffered and enrollment into Gallaudet University significantly declined.³³

For many years since the founding of VSDB, the deaf and the blind schools wanted to separate. In 1922, a proposal was introduced to separate the schools. The proposal was that the deaf school would remain in Staunton and the blind school would relocate at another site. "The General Assembly on March 21, 1924, approved a bill to establish a school for the blind white children of Virginia on a site of 187 acres near Charlottesville, and appropriated \$42,000 for the acquisition of the land. To assure passage of the bill, Helen Keller and some pupils from the Staunton school appeared before the legislators."³⁴

There was great rejoicing but it suddenly died when the school



VSDB dairy herd and barn



The second Vocational Building



Prize winning colonial doll house



VSDB professors in 1882



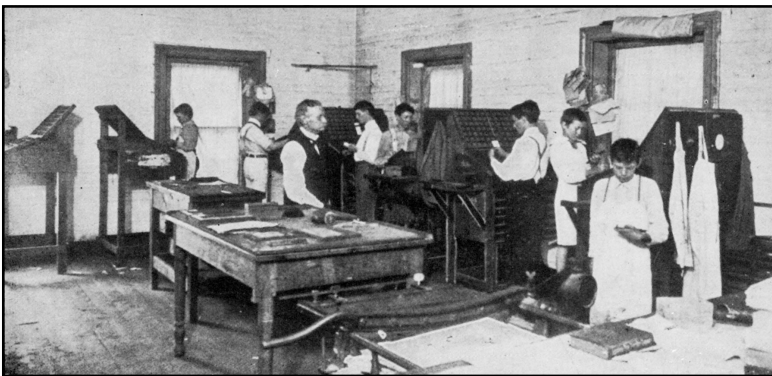
VSDB classroom in 1900



Sewing class, 1899



Shoemaking class, 1898



*Printing
class, 1898*

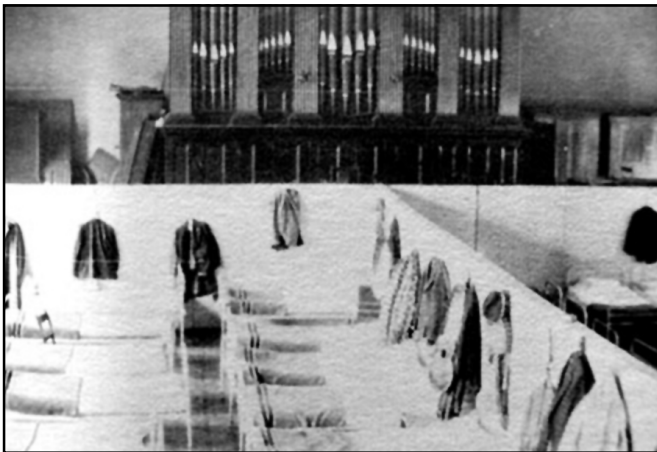


wasn't built due to lack of funding. It was a bitter defeat for proponents of the two schools.³⁵ For the next few decades, this move to separate the schools was tried again and again without success. Finally it was abandoned and the property beside University of Virginia was sold seventy-four years later in 1998.³⁶ In spite of the controversy surrounding the separation, VSDB went forward and focused on growing the enrollment of the school. In 1928, Byrd Hall for elementary deaf students was erected. Byrd Hall had bedrooms, bathrooms (including showers), and classrooms for elementary students. The beloved naming tradition continued and another governor, Harry Byrd, was honored.³⁷

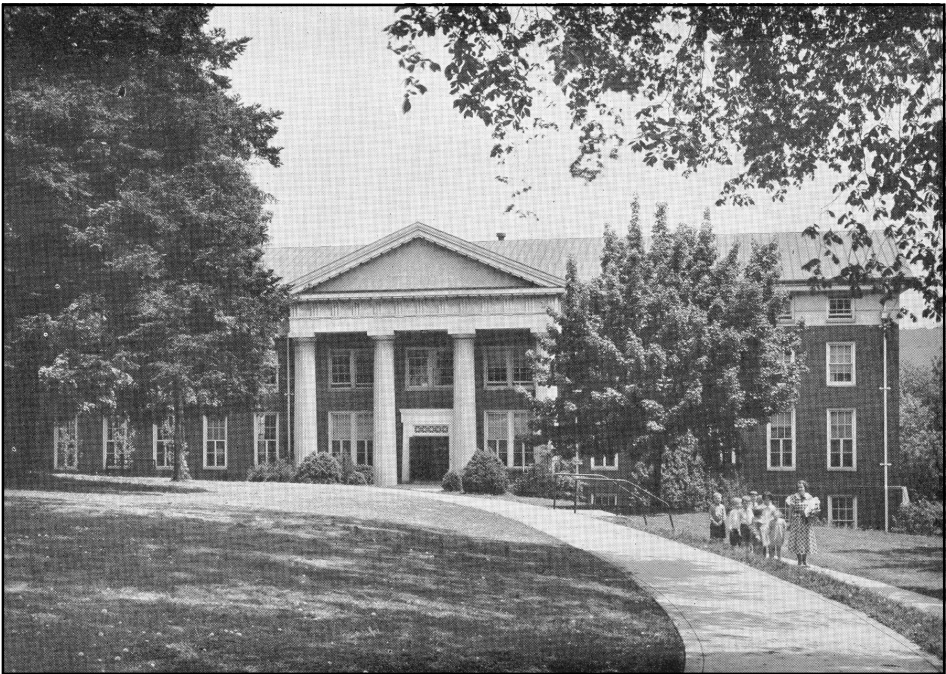
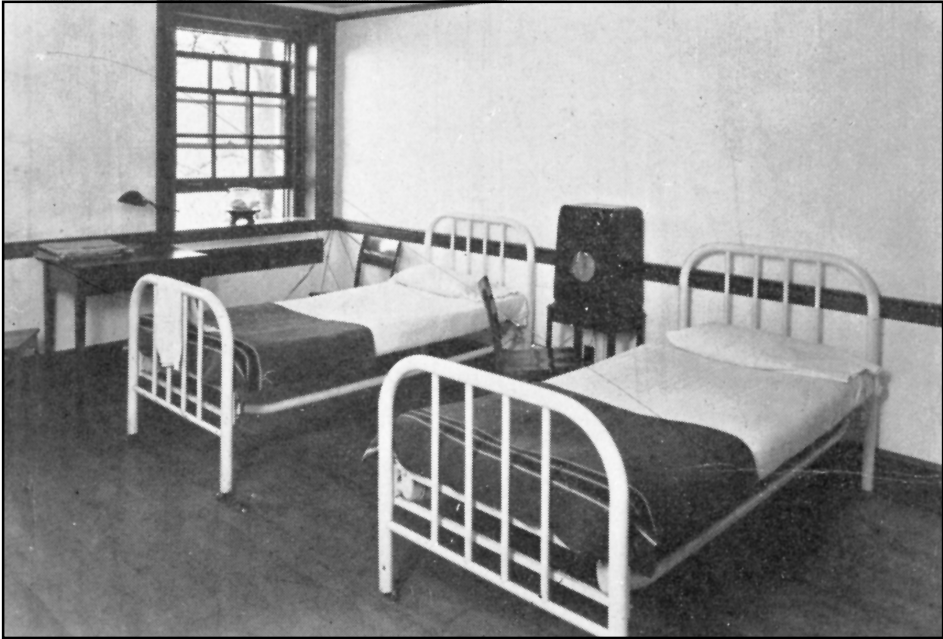
In 1931, a shocking discovery was made. Tyler Hall, the dorm building for blind students, was determined to be unsafe. Thirty-one blind boys were quickly evacuated out of the condemned dormitory. Because other dorms were full, they were temporarily placed in the Chapel.³⁸

The following year, another shocking and mysterious situation occurred. The dairy barn caught fire and was destroyed. The cause of the fire was unknown. Arson was suspected but never proven despite numerous rumors.³⁹

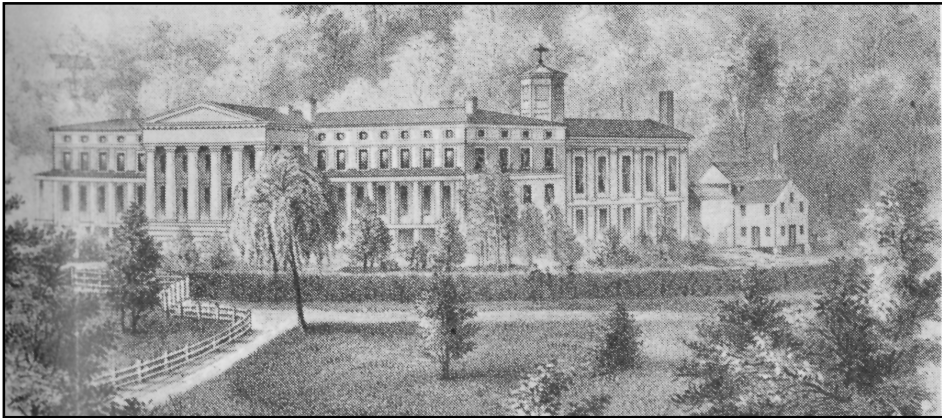
The condemned building, Tyler Hall, was torn down in 1934 and the house for the superintendent was erected. The next year, in place of the condemned building, Peery Hall was erected and named after the Virginia Governor George C. Peery.⁴⁰ In 1937, the old boiler house was removed. The following year, the old gate was removed and the new gray stone posts were put up.⁴¹



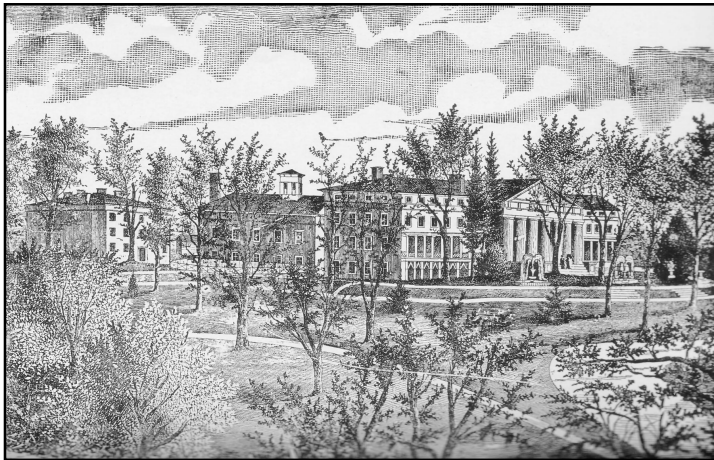
The Chapel served as a temporary dormitory when Tyler Hall was evacuated.



Byrd Hall, interior (top) and exterior



Main Hall 1880



Main Hall 1890



Main Hall 1890



"In 1939, after some years of controversy with the alumni of the school over the methods of instruction and management, Superintendent McManaway resigned and went to Staunton Military Academy as an instructor."⁴² McManaway left under great pressure. VSDB received a new superintendent, Joseph Ewart Healy. He became the eleventh superintendent of the school. The sign language ban was lifted and sign language was again allowed at VSDB.⁴³



Two images showing the entrance to VSDB. The top photo shows the water tower.



In 1939 VSDB celebrated its 100th birthday. In that year the tradition of homecoming was launched and the first Homecoming Day was observed at VSDB on October 21 with the football game against the West Virginia School for the Deaf.⁴⁴

Capital improvements and maintenance on the VSDB campus were continuous. In 1940, the school put its old 30,000-gallon water tower up for sale. The advertisement in the July 27, 1940, edition of the *Staunton News Leader* boasted that the tower was seventy-eight feet tall and in good condition.⁴⁵

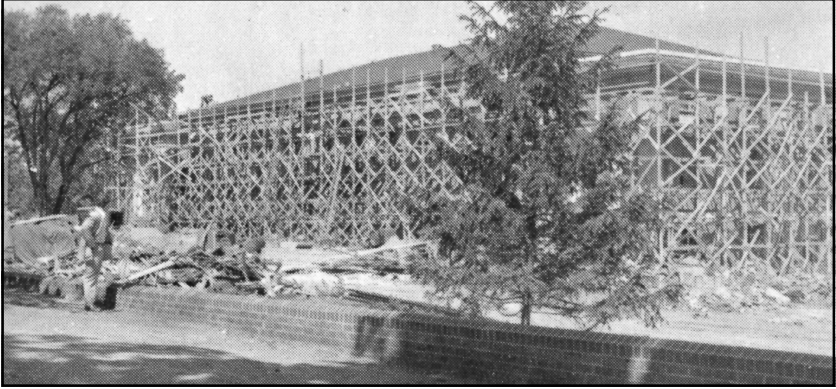
The issue of the school's name came up again in 1946 when a proposal was introduced in the Virginia General Assembly to change the name of the school to the Virginia School in Staunton. Wanting to keep the unique name of the Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind, the proposal was rejected.⁴⁶ In 1948, the deaf department introduced a mascot, the Red Raider. That mascot was changed to the Cardinal in 1964.⁴⁷

In 1949 the book *The History of the Education of the Deaf in Virginia* was published. Author Robert Aumon Bass graduated from VSDB in 1908 and was the school's historian.⁴⁸

In 1950, another dormitory building, Darden Hall, was erected and named in honor of the Virginia governor at the time, Colgate Darden Jr. In 1951, the fifty-three-year trend of naming buildings after the state governor was broken when the new gymnasium was named after the



Darden Hall





Lewellyn Gymnasium under construction, top left; complete, middle left, the interior of the new gymnasium, bottom left. The two photographs from the building's dedication ceremony, above.



first deaf physical education director, T. Carlton Lewellyn. He served for forty-nine years (1913-1962). With the brand new majestic gymnasium in place, the first annual Mason-Dixon basketball tournament was held at VSDB in 1953.⁴⁹

For years, students enjoyed the swimming pool in the basement of the Stuart Building but in 1953, a crack was discovered in the pool and it was closed. The school did not have a swimming pool again for thirty-eight years when one was finally built in 1991.⁵⁰

Another storm threatened VSDB since the troubled “storm” of the Milan Resolution and the language ban. After fifteen years of peace, VSDB was forced to address the issue of desegregation. In 1954, the Supreme Court ruled that segregation was unconstitutional in the landmark case of *Brown v. the Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*. This ruling required that public schools be desegregated. Virginia responded to this ruling with a massive resistance, which meant that, to avoid desegregation, the state threatened to close its public schools altogether. Despite the state’s stance, VSDB remained open. However, it would be eleven years before the first black student enrolled in the school. For 126 years, VSDB had been an all-white school for the deaf and the blind in the state of Virginia. In 1965, after U.S. President Lyndon Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act, VSDB complied and accepted the first black student, a deaf boy named Larry Fortune.⁵¹

In 1954, Battle Hall, a dormitory for blind girls was erected. It was named after the Virginia governor, John Stewart Battle.⁵² In 1955, school historian and educator, Robert Aumon Bass, tried to locate VSDB’s original cornerstone because he thought it might contain a time capsule box with old documents and mementos from the school’s founding. He did some research and asked several people for any idea of the location of the cornerstone. One day, a man from the Masonic Lodge came over to locate and pull one of the stones out, which they believed to be the cornerstone, but they were mistaken. Bass never found the cornerstone. Today it remains a mystery.⁵³

In 1958, Joe R. Shinpaugh became the twelfth superintendent of the school.⁵⁴ In 1959, the blind department’s mascot was introduced, the Chief, in honor of Coach William (Chief) Burrows. He was a Native American. Coach Burrows was known as the father of wrestling in Virginia.⁵⁵ In 1959, the maintenance building was erected. It was built over the garage.⁵⁶ Healy Hall, the educational building for the deaf, was also



Battle Hall



Healy Hall



erected in 1959. It was named after Superintendent Joseph Healy. It would be fifty-three years before another building was named for a school superintendent.

Wanting to expand to accommodate growing enrollment requests, VSDB purchased Braxton House and its surrounding land in 1961. VSDB quickly realized that the purchase created a dilemma. New Hope Road stood between the Braxton property and VSDB campus. VSDB wanted to close the road, but the city of Staunton resisted because it was very convenient for residents to access Beverley Street from New Hope Road. The fight between the city of Staunton and VSDB went on for two years. Finally an agreement was reached between the city and VSDB. In order to close New Hope Road, VSDB had to buy fourteen houses along the road, across the baseball field. VSDB agreed and New Hope Road was closed. Over the years, VSDB rented out these houses. Eventually VSDB dismantled them one by one. The last house was dismantled in 2008 and replaced by the Shafer Maintenance Complex.⁵⁷

Now freed to put the Braxton property to good use and expand to accommodate its increasing enrollment, VSDB renovated the Braxton House and renamed it Bradford Hall in honor of Dr. Charles Bradford in 1963. VSDB went on to build two additional dormitories. Carter Hall would house elementary school age deaf girls and Watts Hall was erected for elementary school age blind boys. Carter Hall was named after the



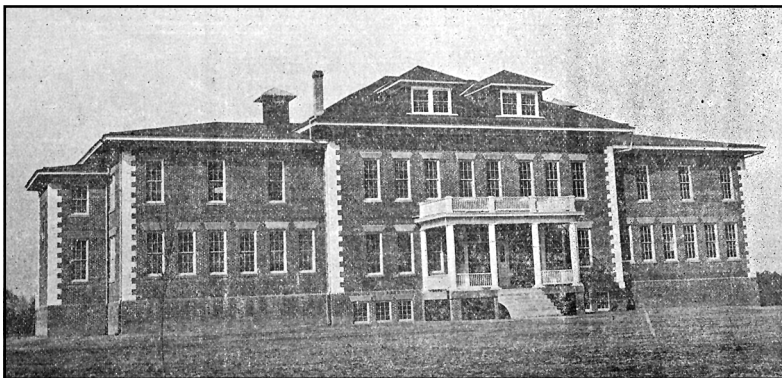
Bradford Hall



VSDB Board of Visitors president, Colonel Curry Carter. Watts Hall was named after Lucian L. Watts, a graduate of VSDB. In 1966, VSDB continued the tradition of erecting a building and naming it for the current Virginia governor. The new cafeteria for elementary children was erected was named after Albertis S. Harrison Jr. Montague Hall was torn down in 1966 and, on that same location the following year, VSDB erected a new dormitory for high school deaf girls. It was named after Robert Aumon Bass and his wife, Mary Scott Bass. They both worked at VSDB for many years and he was the school historian. The dining hall was placed in the basement of Bass Hall. Taking advantage of the Braxton property, VSDB erected a dormitory for deaf boys in 1968. It was named after the president of the VSDB Board of Visitors, Charles D. Price. In 1972, Strader Hall, a vocational building, was erected. It was named after Ludwell Strader who served on the board of visitors from 1962 to 1967 and was president of that board from 1966 to 1967.⁵⁸

By 1972, VSDB had swelled to over 500 deaf and blind students.⁵⁹ However, in 1974, the Virginia General Assembly mandated that deaf and blind students living west of I-95 attend VSDB in Staunton while those living east of I-95 attend the sister school in Hampton. With this mandate, both schools suffered enrollment and a rivalry between the schools was launched that never stopped.⁶⁰

In 1975, Congress passed the Education of All Handicapped Children Act (Public Law 94-142). The new law impacted not only VSDB, but also all of the nation's state schools for the deaf and the blind. The law forced public schools to accept handicapped children into the mainstream schools if the parents desired that educational track for their children. The result was that once Congress passed the bill, schools for



VSDB Hampton



the deaf and the blind suffered enrollment losses as many deaf and blind students began attending public schools.⁶¹ Since 1975, schools for the deaf and the blind slowly have grown smaller and smaller. Some school closed altogether. VSDB went from 435 students in 1975 to 115 students in 2011.⁶²

In 1978, Sheldon Melton became the thirteenth superintendent of the school. Two years later, in 1980, the war between the sister schools, VSDB-Staunton and VSDB-Hampton, surfaced again when the state of Virginia announced its desire to close one of the schools. Each school fought for the right to be the only school in the state of Virginia for the Deaf and the Blind. After thirty years, VSDB-Staunton won the battle and absorbed the students from Hampton, many of which were profoundly handicapped.⁶³

In 1984, VSDB decided to fully go under the Virginia Department of Education and dropped its board of visitors. VSDB's enrollment continued to suffer. In 1989, Darden Hall, the dormitory for high school boys, closed. Ironically, during that same year, VSDB celebrated its 150th anniversary.⁶⁴

In 1991, Abernathy Natatorium was erected. It was named after Louise Abernathy, a long time student life director. In 1992, Dr. Joseph Panko became the fourteenth superintendent of the school. In 1999, Robert Whytal became the fifteenth superintendent of the school.⁶⁵

In 1999, the controversial I-95 mandate was removed. Deaf and blind students in the state of Virginia again had the choice to attend either VSDB-Staunton or VSDB-Hampton.⁶⁶

Dr. Nancy Armstrong, VSDB's current superintendent, became the sixteenth superintendent in 2001.⁶⁷ Suddenly that year on September 11, terrorists attacked America. Many people died on that day. Since that day, America was never the same including Virginia and VSDB.

In 2008, the 100-year-old VSDB-Hampton closed. Next year, the board of visitors was brought back to VSDB. The cold war between VSDB-Staunton and VSDB-Hampton finally ceased, pushing VSDB-Staunton into a period of peace.⁶⁸

VSDB still pressed onward looking to the future and its commitment to children who are deaf and blind in the state of Virginia. With that commitment, VSDB underwent a major renovation. The first change was the Shafer Maintenance Complex for the maintenance staff, which was erected in 2009 in honor of Denis Shafer, a former slave who served



Abernathy Pool



Bass Hall



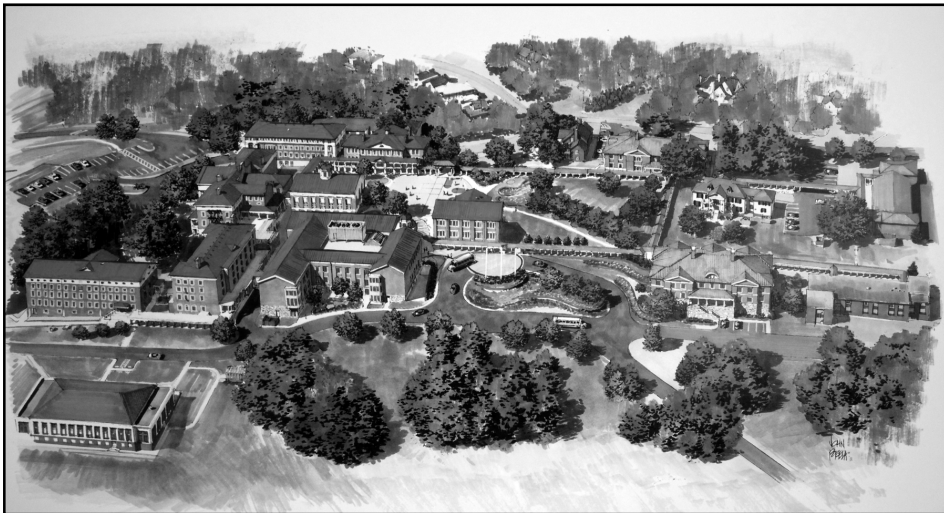
The Kitchen Staff House



New Kiser Hall



VSDB 1891



VSDB 2011



VSDB for many years. The second change came when the Stuart Building, abandoned for many years, found new life with a major renovation that turned it into a library and student center in 2010. Next came the demolition of Carter Hall to make room for a new dormitory for high school boys. The new dorm was named after Ralph Kiser, a graduate of VSDB who served the school for many years. Following that, Harrison Hall was demolished and a new dormitory for blind students was erected. The new dormitory was named after Ray Houser, a student of VSDB and long-standing radio celebrity, and Joseph Tyler, the first deaf superintendent of the school. The new educational building, Yates-Shinpaugh Educational Building, was erected in 2012 in honor of Fred Yates, a loyal and faithful servant of VSDB and former superintendent Joe Shinpaugh. Watts Hall was renovated to serve elementary boys and girls.⁶⁹

Through its long history, VSDB has gone through many different name changes. According to an April 4, 1839, newspaper article the first reference to the school used the word asylum. "We have a very great satisfaction to state that the resolution of the House of Delegates, designating Staunton as the location of the Asylum for the Deaf and Dumb and the Blind, has been concurred by the Senate." Prior to 1898, the school was also called the Virginia Institution for the Education of the Deaf and Dumb and the Blind. In 1898 the name changed to the Virginia School for the Education of the Deaf and the Blind. Later in 1898, the school went through another name change to Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind. Gratefully, it was a permanent change. Despite the many name changes, the school has always tried to be a leader in the education of Virginia's deaf and blind children. In 2012, the school heads into its third century having just completed a major renovation and capital improvements. The future looks bright for VSDB.

Endnotes

¹ Robert A. Bass, *History of the Education of the Deaf in Virginia*, 1949.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Records of the Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind (hereafter VSDB records).

⁷ Bass, *A History of the Education of the Deaf in Virginia*.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ *White Columns*, VSDB yearbook, 1979.

¹⁰ Bass, *A History of the Education of the Deaf in Virginia*.



- ¹¹ Ibid.
- ¹² *White Columns*, VSDB yearbook, 1979.
- ¹³ Bass, *A History of the Education of the Deaf in Virginia*.
- ¹⁴ Ibid.
- ¹⁵ Ibid.
- ¹⁶ Ibid.
- ¹⁷ Ibid.
- ¹⁸ Ibid., 73.
- ¹⁹ Bass, *A History of the Education of the Deaf in Virginia*.
- ²⁰ Ibid.
- ²¹ *White Columns*, VSDB yearbook, 1979.
- ²² Wikipedia, www.wikipedia.com.
- ²³ Bass, *A History of the Education of the Deaf in Virginia*.
- ²⁴ Wikipedia, www.wikipedia.com.
- ²⁵ VSDB records.
- ²⁶ Bass, *A History of the Education of the Deaf in Virginia*.
- ²⁷ VSDB records.
- ²⁸ VSDB records.
- ²⁹ VSD Museum records.
- ³⁰ Bass, *A History of the Education of the Deaf in Virginia*.
- ³¹ Ibid.
- ³² VSD Museum records.
- ³³ VSD Museum records.
- ³⁴ Bass, *A History of the Education of the Deaf in Virginia*.
- ³⁵ Ibid.
- ³⁶ VSD Museum records.
- ³⁷ Ibid.
- ³⁸ *Staunton News Leader*, 1931.
- ³⁹ VSD Museum records.
- ⁴⁰ Ibid.
- ⁴¹ Bass, *A History of the Education of the Deaf in Virginia*.
- ⁴² Ibid.
- ⁴³ VSD Museum Records.
- ⁴⁴ Bass, *A History of the Education of the Deaf in Virginia*.
- ⁴⁵ *Staunton News Leader*, July 27, 1940.
- ⁴⁶ *Virginia Guide*, 1946.
- ⁴⁷ VSD Museum records.
- ⁴⁸ Ibid.
- ⁴⁹ Ibid.
- ⁵⁰ VSDB records.
- ⁵¹ VSD Museum Records.
- ⁵² *White Columns*, VSDB yearbook, 1979.
- ⁵³ VSD Museum records.
- ⁵⁴ VSDB records and J.H. Cline.
- ⁵⁵ VSD Museum records.
- ⁵⁶ Ibid.
- ⁵⁷ Ibid.
- ⁵⁸ VSDB enrollment records.
- ⁵⁹ VSDB records.
- ⁶⁰ Wikipedia, www.wikipedia.com.
- ⁶¹ VSDB records.
- ⁶² VSD Museum records and VSDB records.
- ⁶³ VSD Museum records.
- ⁶⁴ Ibid.
- ⁶⁵ VSDB records.
- ⁶⁶ VSD Museum records.
- ⁶⁷ Ibid.
- ⁶⁸ VSDB records.
- ⁶⁹ *White Columns*, VSDB yearbook, 1979 and Bass, *A History of the Education of the Deaf in Virginia*.



Book Reviews

[Editor's Note: The following section consists of reviews of recent books on regional and Virginia history as well as several that pertain to the history of the South. Unless otherwise noted, these reviews are by AHB Book Review Editor and Associate Editor Daniel A. Métraux, Professor of Asian Studies at Mary Baldwin College. Please send any reviews or questions about reviews to the AHB's Book Review Editor, Daniel Métraux at dmetraux@mbc.edu or Dept. of Asian Studies, Mary Baldwin College, Staunton, VA 24401. The deadline for all reviews is October 1, 2013.]

Books on Virginia in the Civil War

Edward L. Ayers, Gary W. Gallagher and Andrew Torget, Eds. , *Crucible of the Civil War: Virginia from Secession to Commemoration*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2009. 226 pp.

Much has been written about Virginia's military involvement in the Civil War, but far less attention has been paid to the ways in which the war affected Virginia's economic, social and political networks. This drought has been mitigated somewhat by a brilliant work, *Crucible of the Civil War: Virginia from Secession to Commemoration*, edited by three distinguished former and current University of Virginia historians, Edward L. Ayers, Gary W. Gallagher, and Andrew Torget. They have assembled a group of essays by some of their most promising graduate students on such varied topics as Virginia's decision to secede from the Union, the development of Confederate nationalism, the wartime slave market in the state, the intersection of race and religion, and how Virginians chose to remember the war in the years that followed Appomattox.

Readers in the Augusta County region will be most interested in the opening chapter, "Unions of Slavery: Slavery, Politics, and Secession in the Valley of Virginia" by Andrew J. Torget. Torget, basing his research on a careful reading of newspapers in the Valley in 1860 and 1861, finds that slavery was critically important to the economy of Rockingham, Augusta, and Rockbridge Counties – Augusta farmers alone had almost seven million dollars invested in their enslaved laborers and slaves made up almost a quarter of the population of Rockbridge. Staunton's leading politician, John Baldwin, declared "As a Southern man, as a slaveholder in Virginia, I never can con-



sent that this great interest, this great institution of the South, shall be placed under the ban of government."

Because slavery was the mainstay of the largely agricultural economy of these counties, there was the fear that civil war would bring a military invasion from the North and the forced termination of this institution. Since the Constitution specifically safe-guarded slavery, the best way to protect their way of life would be to remain in the Union. Unionist candidates John Bell and Stephen Douglas received close to ninety-five percent of the vote in Augusta County in the 1860 election and secessionist candidate John Breckinridge did poorly throughout the region. "The danger is in secession" warned the Staunton *Spectator*. The *Lexington Gazette* opined: "our opposition to Virginia's going into a Southern Confederacy has been on account of the institution of slavery... We are devoted to that institution. " The newspaper believed that there was no surer way to destroy Virginia slavery than to abandon the protections of the Constitution and involve the state in a civil war.

Torget finds that this pro-Unionist sentiment remained strong in the months that followed Lincoln's election. There was no love for Lincoln and the Republican Party, but Lincoln had publicly stated that his administration would not seek to terminate slavery where it already existed. It was best to wait and see how the crisis would play itself out. Voters in the three counties overwhelmingly supported Unionist candidates over secessionists in the February 4, 1861, election of delegates for the Richmond convention that would determine whether or not the state would secede.

Local opinion began to change after Lincoln's inaugural address in March, 1861. Although the U.S. President tried to calm Southern fears that the Federal government would not interfere in any way with their personal property, he promised "to hold, occupy and possess the property belonging to the government and to collect the duties and imports" of the government in the seceded states. These words sounded threatening to many in the region and they began to pay more attention to the promises of the new Confederate government in the Lower South that it would protect Virginia and slavery.

As more and more southern states seceded, the likelihood of war increased and by April, 1861, Valley residents, like many other Virginians, felt increasingly insecure and isolated. Even before the



outbreak of hostilities at Fort Sumter and Lincoln's call for an armed force to put down the insurrection, they had given up their pro-Union stance and were ready for secession. As Torget notes in his conclusion:

For the Valley, there was no more need for talk of saving the Federal Union; they saw nothing left for Virginians in a pact that tied them to Republican whims. Secession was not what voters in the Valley wanted, but they believed they had been given no other choice. For Rockingham, Augusta, and Rockbridge, the time had come to unite with the Lower South and face the Republicans with a unified and common front. "Let all stand together," shouted the *Spectator*. "We are still for Union—a Union of brave and patriotic men for the defence of our State."

Other chapters examine the question of regionalism in Virginia, the slave market before and during the war, the problem General Lee and others faced concerning their devotion to Virginia over their loyalty to the United States, and the difficulties of reconciliation in Reconstruction Virginia.

The reader should take time to absorb and relish this fascinating book—really the best volume available on life in our state during the war.

Jonathan A. Noyalas, *The Battle of Cedar Creek: Victory from the Jaws of Defeat*. Charleston, S.C.: The History Press, 2009. 125pp.

In virtually every war where there is a decisive victory by one side or other there is a "tipping point," one event that changes the whole flow of action and leads to a clear outcome. The Battle of Midway in 1942 paved the way for American victory in the Pacific just as D-Day was a key factor in Germany's collapse almost a year later.

The Battle of Cedar Creek in October of 1864 was a important "tipping point" in the Civil War. The Shenandoah Valley was critical to the hopes of the Confederacy. This valuable stretch of land with its rich soil and large harvests was often called the "breadbasket of the Confederacy" because much of the food that fed Lee's army originated there. Union and Confederate forces fought at least thirteen battles there, but none was more significant than Cedar Creek. When Federal forces led by General Philip Sheridan defeated General Jubal Early's army, Union forces gained full control over the Valley. There were further battles which resulted in hard fought Northern victories, but Cedar Creek turned the tide and allowed



Sheridan's army to sweep up the Valley to occupy towns like Staunton and Waynesboro. The region was lost as a rich supply source for General Lee's army, which was on the verge of starvation when it surrendered to General Grant at Appomattox less than six months later.

The battle began as a desperate attempt by General Early to dislodge Federal forces that had effectively gained control over the northern tip of the Valley in early October 1864. General Sheridan's army had engaged in a major campaign to destroy all the farms and crops in the rich northern sector of the Valley around Winchester and had begun digging in to build an imposing defensive bastion before launching a broad invasion to the south. Sheridan's officers were confident that Early's army was too weak to launch an offensive, but the Confederate general, realizing the precariousness of his position and the over-confidence of his adversary, decided to launch a surprise attack in a desperate gamble to regain the initiative.

Confederate forces launched a surprise attack at dawn on October 19 that routed Union forces from their beds. Scores of Union soldiers fled in their underclothes as the Confederates tore through their camps, but word of the attack spread quickly through Union lines. A number of badly outnumbered Federal regiments, including the famed Vermont 8th Regiment, made a valiant stand against the Confederates which greatly slowed their advance and gave the rest of Sheridan's army a chance to react.

General Sheridan himself was absent on the morning of the attack. He was sleeping in Winchester on his way to Washington to confer with other Union generals when he learned of Early's attack. He mounted his horse and dashed south where he met portions of his army in full retreat. He ordered his troops to reverse course to meet the Confederates head on. By then the Confederate surge had expended itself and Sheridan's counterattack quickly led to his brilliant victory.

Sheridan's victory, which made him a great hero throughout the North, also enhanced President Lincoln's victory in the 1864 election. His opponent, General George McClellan had expected a large soldier vote to propel him to victory, but with Union morale at an all-time high, Lincoln received seventy-eight percent of the soldier's vote.

Jonathan A. Noyalas, an assistant professor of history at Lord Fairfax Community College in Middletown, Virginia, and a respected



authority on the Civil War in the Valley, has produced a very well-researched and written study of the battle. He provides a clear analysis of the importance of the battle in turning the tide of the war. His final chapters depict the efforts by veterans from both armies in later years to return to the sites of the battle and how these joint efforts helped to bring a very real reconciliation between both sides. Noyalas' work deserves a place in every library collection on the Civil War.

Elsie Renalds Newcomer and Janet Renalds Ramsey, Eds., 1861 *Life in the Shenandoah Valley*. Mechanicsville, Va.: Battlefield Press, 2011. 346 pp.

One can view wars from at least two very different perspectives. There is the macro-view that involves looking at the decisions of government officials, the movement of armies, and the results of decisive military engagements. The other perspective is how war affects the individual daily lives of people. Most studies of the Civil War engage various aspects of the conflict from a macro-perspective, too often neglecting the tiny minutia of daily life that give one a more complete picture of what was going on.

The Shenandoah Valley played a critical role in the Confederate war effort. Here grew much of the grain and other foodstuffs that fed the forces of the South. The capture of the Valley was a major preoccupation of Union forces from the very start of the conflict. Federal and Confederate forces fought vigorously to claim the northern tier of the Valley, but Southern forces first under Stonewall Jackson and later under Jubal Early kept all but that tier of the Valley clear of Federal troops until late in 1864.

But, while outside forces were fighting for control of the Valley, life had to go on for the thousands of its residents. Just how they lived and what they thought has received scant attention until recently. Edward Ayers, now president of the University of Richmond, has done a superb job with his books and his internet site, *Valley of the Shadow*, of focusing on the minutia of daily life. And more recently, two local historians, Elsie Renalds Newcomer and Janet Renalds Ramsey, have published a highly useful tome, *1861: Life in the Shenandoah Valley*.

The editors describe their book as follows:



The year 2011 is the Sesquicentennial of the beginning of the Civil War. Our great-grandfather Siram Peter Henkel left an extensive record of his day-to-day activities and experiences in a journal which he kept for many years, including the Civil War years. Siram and his wife, Margaret Coiner, had three sons who served in the War Between the States. They lived on the North Fork of the Shenandoah River, a few miles west of the town of New Market, Virginia. In this book we have focused on the year 1861 from his journal, the first year of the War. In addition to the journal, we discovered a collection of personal letters and newspaper articles, which added details to the story told by the journal. The letters were written to or by Dr. Caspar Coiner Henkel, a nephew of Siram Henkel. The news items were primarily from articles of the period published by the *Daily Dispatch* of Richmond, Virginia, related to events in the counties of Shenandoah, Rockingham, and Augusta, and elsewhere in the Shenandoah Valley. This combination of source materials, interspersed chronologically, is intended to present to the reader the life and times of Siram and his family and neighbors. It will show how the War affected them and the people of the Shenandoah Valley 150 years ago, during those turbulent times in our nation's history when the Valley became a battleground.

The text consists of a mélange of the materials noted above arranged sequentially. There is no attempt to really edit them or to put them in context—reading this book is like going through a carefully ordered box of materials and nothing more. As the editors note, “Readers can make their own discoveries, raise their own questions, and come to their own conclusions by reading the original documents...” This is not the kind of book that one would or could devour in one sitting and one is hampered by a lack of an index. Nevertheless, *1861* serves as an invaluable collection of documents that serves its purpose very well. This book is a virtual treasure house of material for anybody interested in the Civil War and there are many period illustrations that greatly enhance the value of the work.

One revealing document is a letter from local resident Mann Spittler to President Jefferson Davis requesting help for harvesting crops in the Valley:

...The valley of Virginia is a wheat-growing country, in which slave labor is scarce; consequently, the larger proportion of the labor must be performed by white men between the ages of eighteen to forty-five years. The time for seeding the crop has arrived, and unless at least a considerable proportion of the men new here can be returned to their homes to attend to putting that crop in the ground we will be unable to raise supplies sufficient for our own subsistence.



In addition to this, we are here with not more than one-half of our men armed, and they are armed with the most inferior guns, so that, if we are to be attacked, we would be compelled an inglorious retreat, and bring upon as brave men as can be found in any country the ridicule of the public.

...In view of these facts we regard it as our duty to the men under our commands... that we should make to you a simple statement, being satisfied that you will render us the relief asked for, if consistent with the interest, prosperity, and happiness of our Confederacy, by permitting us for the present to return to our homes. (208-09)

There is no printed reply to this request, but it is a fine example of the kinds of documents that make this book such a worthy enterprise.

Elsie Renalds Newcomer and Janet Renalds Ramsey, Eds. , 1862: *Life in the Shenandoah Valley*. Mechanicsville, Va.: Battlefield Press, 2012. 344 pp.

Renalds and Ramsey's 1862: *Life in the Shenandoah Valley* is a fascinating sequel to their 1861 book discussed in the previous review. We have much the same cast of characters writing to each other, keeping their journals, and timely articles from local Valley newspapers. We are treated mainly to pieces by civilians not involved in the actual fighting, but there are occasional letters from soldiers on the front lines.

The year 1862 was a time of desperation in the Valley. Federal forces were determined to seize the Valley in order to destroy the "breadbasket" that was feeding Lee's forces, but they were frustrated by the brilliant maneuvers and hard fighting of Stonewall Jackson and his troops. The "front" kept changing day by day as Federal forces marched down as far south as New Markets before making a strategic withdrawal to the North. But even though there was fighting going on, civilians did their best to carry on normal lives. They worked their farms, got married, died, and were buried. Sadly, we hear about a constant stream of bodies of "Valley boys" being brought home and many funerals.

We now see a growing sense of Southern nationalism—the sense that the people of the Valley now belonged to a new nation that was worth fighting for. A newspaper commenting on the formal inauguration of Jefferson Davis as Confederate President in February 1862 noted:

And thus was completed the organization of our new government;
a Government founded upon the devotion of a loyal and patriotic



people, and relying upon Providence for its permanent establishment and perpetual continuance. Its machinery is now all complete, and that it will work harmoniously, and to the best interests of the country, we do not mean to permit ourselves to doubt. (71)

And yet there is a deep worry, even foreboding, about what may be in store for the Valley in the near future. A Valley resident, Fannie Coiner, expresses her fears to her cousin Casper Coiner in a March 11, 1862, missive:

I hope and trust a brighter day will soon dawn upon our unhappy land.... should our reverses be so great that we would have to see our lovely Valley, and indeed the whole state...subjugated, and run over by the vile foot of the invader, I shall not despair. You remember our president, in his last message, says we have made a great mistake, by trying to defend so much Territory with so small a force, let us give up some points and strengthen others, and draw our enemy farther into the interior where every man is loyal and see whether or not we will whip them, yes we will do it, a just God will aid us.... Cousin Casper, I feel deeply the afflictions of our beloved country, and think hourly of the soldiers who so much hoped that this bloody strife would end soon and they could all return again to their own homes but now alas, cannot see one glimmer.

But no one would dare to express pro-Union sentiments. There is a note about one man who did so and who soon thereafter found himself in prison.

We here in Staunton hear a great deal about Jedediah Hotchkiss, Stonewall Jackson's chief cartographer. He wrote many letters to his beloved wife where he describes life in the Confederate army. Excerpts from many of his letters greatly enhance the narrative quality of this volume.

The book *1862* shares both the strengths and weaknesses of *1861*, so there is no point replicating that commentary here. This volume gives the reader an almost day by day view of the war as it was viewed by a whole crew of people living in the Valley at the time. It is a piece of work that should be in every Valley library and used as supplemental reading for any course that covers Virginia in the Civil War.



Books on the American Presidency in the post Civil War period
Candice Millard, *Destiny of the Republic: A Tale of Madness, Medicine and the Murder of a President*. New York: Doubleday, 2011. 339 pp.

Four American presidents have been the victims of assassins' bullets. There are hundreds of books on the murders of Lincoln and Kennedy and quite a few about McKinley because his death brought us Teddy Roosevelt. But few people know anything about James Garfield and even less about his vice-president and successor, Chester Arthur. Yet Garfield was an extraordinarily gifted man whose promising presidency was cut short a hundred days after its inception.

Historian Candice Millard has composed a fascinating study of Garfield and his assassin Charles J. Guiteau, an insane lawyer and frustrated office seeker. Garfield was an authentic American hero. Born in a log cabin in Ohio in 1831, he attended what is now Hiram College and soon after graduation became a professor and president of the school. A gifted public speaker and active abolitionist, he was elected to the Ohio State Senate in his late twenties and became a Union general during the Civil War. After the war he became an influential Congressman with a national reputation. He attended the 1880 Republican convention in Chicago as a delegate and refused the support of a few delegates who urged him to announce his candidacy. When the convention deadlocked after many ballots, many frustrated delegates began a Garfield bandwagon that in due course led to his nomination. He won a very narrow victory in the fall election.

Millard provides a rather cursory analysis of Garfield's rise to the presidency, but offers a detailed account of his brief presidency and long lingering death. His wounds were not serious—no vital organs were hit, but unnecessary probing by various doctors in a vain attempt to dislodge one of the bullets led to infections that in turn brought on his death.

There is also a lengthy discourse on Guiteau's gradual drift into lunacy. We watch as he visits the White House and joins an endless line of other office seekers. We learn that in the 1800s the U.S. President was very much a public man. Any person off the street could walk into the White House and, if lucky, could actually make a personal appointment to see the President. Garfield often walked alone around Washington and was in fact shot on his way from the White House to a local train depot to catch a train to New Jersey.



Millard's book is an easy and most informative read. Garfield lived at the height of the Gilded Age when the United States was becoming the preeminent world industrial leader. *Destiny of the Nation* is a fascinating and well-researched view of that critical period in the nation's history.

Charles Bracelen Flood, *Grant's Final Victory: Ulysses S. Grant's Heroic Last Year*. Da Capo Press: Philadelphia, 2011. 288 pp.

When former General and later President Ulysses S. Grant (1822-1885) died during the hot summer of 1885, he was next to Lincoln the most respected and beloved American hero of the nineteenth century. He was revered throughout the North as the savior of the Republic, the one general who led Union troops to a final decisive victory over the Confederacy. Many Southerners respected him not only for his military genius, but also for his generosity in allowing Lee, his officers, and enlisted men to go home after Appomattox without any fear of recrimination. Later Grant used his great prestige to prevent the arrest and trial of important Confederate leaders such as Lee and President Davis. Many Confederate veterans wrote letters of encouragement and sympathy to Grant and his family during his final illness. Pallbearers at his funeral included two Confederate generals and Confederate officers in the funeral procession rode together with Union officers in the same carriages.

Grant is never listed as one of the great American presidents. He served two terms and made important contributions to the advancement of African-American and Native American rights among other things, but many officials whom Grant appointed to high office and had his trust were involved in notorious scandals. It is Grant the General, the modest man who won the Civil War who commanded so much devotion and respect.

Grant's final year was marked by both severe tragedy and great triumph. When he retired to New York City in the early 1880s, he had achieved a measure of prosperity that led him to think that he could live out his days without any worries. He invested his and his family's considerable assets in the investment firm of Grant & Ward run by his son Buck and banker Ferdinand Ward. In early 1884 Grant was shocked to hear that Ward had swindled all of his firm's money and that he was now bankrupt. Later that fall Grant learned that his



habit of smoking several cigars a day had probably contributed to his fast-spreading incurable throat cancer.

Grant suddenly found himself an impoverished and very sick man with no means to support his family and only months to live. But he refused to give in and initiated an intense search for a means of raising money. He found a solution when several popular magazines had approached him with offers of generous payments for his written reminiscences of his role in the Civil War. Before the collapse of these fortunes, he had shunned such requests, but now he signaled his willingness to write as much as possible. He wrote several magazine articles, but his great project was the writing of his memoirs up through the end of the war.

He was about to sign a contract with the publishers of *Century Magazine* that would have brought him royalties of twenty percent of the revenues of each book sold. Before he signed this contract, author Mark Twain, who had established his own publishing house to publish and distribute his own works, persuaded Grant to sign a very much more lucrative contract (seventy-five percent of all earnings) with him. Grant eventually agreed to Twain's argument and entered into a remarkable partnership with him.

Grant and a couple of secretaries labored hard to produce a two-volume memoir of over 330,000 words. The memoirs eventually sold over 300,000 copies earning the Grant family nearly a half-million dollars. Critics have lauded Grant for his honest and very straightforward writing and some even say that Grant's work ranks among the best memoirs ever written. Grant died just three days after completing the second volume. And he accomplished this despite the great pain he suffered due to his cancer. "If you can imagine what molten lead would be going down your throat, that is what I feel when swallowing," he said.

Author and popular historian Charles Bracelen Flood has written a well-researched and composed study of Grant's final year. There is a lot of solid scholarship here, but the flow and clear writing make for an easy-going reading experience. Perhaps the major contribution of this work is the author's clear reminder of the admiration and love Grant evoked among the public throughout his life.



Scott Miller, *The President and the Assassin: McKinley, Terror and Empire at the Dawn of the American Century*. New York: Random House, 2011. 432 pp.

The scene was dramatic. President William McKinley stood at the head of a reception line inside a gaudy building at the 1901 Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo personally greeting any member of the public who cared to shake his hand. A young man, Leon Czolgosz, walked up to the President and pumped a thirty-two-caliber bullet into him. McKinley, who had just been elected to his second term, was rushed to a nearby medical facility. Doctors at first thought McKinley would recover, but eight days later he succumbed to gangrene that spread to his vital organs.

Veteran *Wall Street Journal* reporter Scott Miller has written a fascinating social and political history of the United States at the turn of the last century. We see a collision between two forces that were struggling against each other: Big Business and Wall Street against workers and labor unions. McKinley's assassination by Czolgosz, an admitted anarchist, is a remarkable metaphor for the battle between these two major forces.

The differences between the two sides were immense. By the time McKinley became President, the United States had become a world power for the first time. It had acquired the Philippines, Cuba, Puerto Rico, and Hawaii, had laid the groundwork for the Panama Canal, and had instituted the "Open Door" policy for China. Wealthy corporations, Wall Street, and rich businessmen strongly supported McKinley in his 1896 and 1900 campaigns to defeat populist former Congressman William Jennings Bryan, who proposed to take America off the gold standard to provide farmers and workers who were his followers with more money, money that they badly needed.

Many Americans suffered during this period. Miller writes: "For every tycoon smoking cigars wrapped in hundred-dollar bills . . . there were tens of thousands of . . . workers for whom life was simply a battle for existence." In this period of huge industrial expansion, it was not unemployment, but wages too low to provide even a fully-employed laborer with enough income to feed a family that was to blame. "'I don't live. I am literally starving,'" a Cincinnati cigar maker told an interviewer who asked how he supported his wife and three children on five dollars per week.



Some labor leaders saw possible redemption through anarchism. Czolgosz himself found some justice in the anarchist movement. He believed there was a great injustice in American society, an inequality that allowed the wealthy to enrich themselves by exploiting the poor. He concluded that the reason for this was the structure of government itself and that the best way to bring down government was to kill its leaders. These thoughts led him to the McKinley reception line at the Pan-American Exposition.

Miller carefully analyzes the rise of American industry after the Civil War, the growing gap between rich and poor, and the collision of the forces of capital and labor. He also details the lives of McKinley and Czolgosz until their ultimate fatal meeting in Buffalo. Miller's lucid writing, obvious research skills, and fine scholarship make this a most worthy study of the United States at the end of the "Gilded Age."

Matthew Algeo, *The President is a Sick Man: Wherein the Supposedly Virtuous Grover Cleveland Survives a Secret Surgery at Sea and Vilifies the Courageous Newspaperman Who Dared Expose the Truth*. Chicago: Chicago Review Press, 2011. 272 pages.

President Grover Cleveland had a reputation for honesty that won him enough public support to be nominated three times as a candidate and to be elected twice to the presidency. Sadly, he abused that public trust in 1893 when, just after he was inaugurated for his second term in 1893, his doctors found what they thought was a tumor on the roof of his mouth. Cleveland secretly assembled a top-flight medical staff and joined them on a friend's yacht. Sailing out into Long Island Sound in early July, the team performed a careful operation that removed much of the President's upper jaw bone and several teeth. The operation was deemed a success and after a period of recuperation, Cleveland resumed his normal life.

Cleveland's recovery would normally have been the end of the story, but the White House's initially successful attempt to hide what happened from the press and the American people opens up a whole new story. Cleveland loathed the press after the public revelations during his first run for the presidency in 1884 that he had fathered a child out of wedlock. Newspapers mocked him and picked up the chant, "Ma, Ma, where's my Pa? Gone to the White House, Ha Ha Ha." The public death watch for General Grant who had died from



a rather similar bout of cancer in 1885 was also something that Cleveland wanted to avoid.

The White House vehemently denied that the President had had an operation for cancer, commenting that he had received some minor dental work. The cover-up worked for a while until a dentist at the scene began to tell the real story to some of his peers. An intrepid newspaper reporter picked up the story and after further research published an account of what had happened. The White House responded with further denials that gained general acceptance and brought disgrace to the journalist. It was only years later that the truth emerged and the reporter was vindicated.

Matthew Algeo has written a fascinating study of this largely forgotten cover-up that is well worth reading. But in so doing, he questions the long-term consequences of such actions. Success in high political office is based partly on trust and if that trust is gone, the person holding the office will have a much harder time administering the affairs of state. There have been other cover-ups in the past involving presidents—including the secrecy over Woodrow Wilson's stroke, Franklin Roosevelt's heart failure, and so on.

This is a cautionary tale—if you want to hold the public trust, tell the truth.

Algeo pads his book with many totally unnecessary tangents that bear little connection to his story, but all in all he has written a fine work that those in high office should heed.

Gregg Jones, *Honor in the Dust: Theodore Roosevelt, War in the Philippines and the Rise of America's Imperial Dream*. Berkeley: New American Library, 2010. 430 pp.

Honor in the Dust, Gregg Jones' most recent book about the American seizure of the Philippines at the dawn of the twentieth century, is a searing indictment of American national character and its history of imperialism. Jones focuses on America's quick and successful attacks on Spain's fading colonial empire in 1898 and then on the prolonged guerilla war in the Philippines (1899-1901) where Filipino forces put up a stiff resistance in their desire for independence against over a hundred thousand American troops. The Americans eventually prevailed and the Philippines became an American colony through the end of World War II.



Although Jones hardly mentions American involvement in recent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the similarities are most striking. American troops were initially greeted as liberators when they very quickly dispatched the Spanish from Manila after over three centuries of rule from Madrid, but they are quickly despised as heartless occupiers. The United States then embarked on a bitter war of conquest and soon declared itself the winner, but the savage fighting continued. There then emerged harsh allegations of American torture of both civilians as well as combatants, horrifying the public and leading to strong opposition to the war by large segments of the population.

The conflict was costly for both sides. American casualties numbered in the thousands and the Filipino death count was much higher. While the Spanish had quickly succumbed to American attacks, the Filipinos, though poor, offered far better resistance. They created their own underground governments, produced an effective military to counter the Americans, and developed a guerilla insurgency that attacked and killed small groups of American troops and then melted back into the countryside before they could be caught. Frustrated American forces then employed many of the same tactics that they had blamed on the Spanish including the incineration of whole villages, execution of suspected guerillas and civilian officials, and engaging in various forms of torture including the infamous water cure.

We get a view of American politics in 1900—a popular but dithering President William McKinley who was reluctant to make decisions that he knew would entangle the U.S. in wars of conquest that could cost many lives. There is the rising star, Teddy Roosevelt, who when he became President in 1901 was determined to keep the Philippines at all cost and to make the U.S. into a world power. Pro-imperialist Republicans and anti-imperialist Democrats fight to gain popular support and control the public perception of events.

Honor in the Dust is a fascinating and well-researched and written study of America's first venture as an Asian power.

W. Barksdale Maynard, *Woodrow Wilson: Princeton to the Presidency*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009. 392 pp.

W. Barksdale Maynard, a lecturer in art and archaeology at Princeton University, has produced a vivid biography of the formative years of Staunton-born Woodrow Wilson. Wilson was a major



character and leader of the Progressive Movement that moved to center stage in the early years of the twentieth century. He was both a realist and an idealist who realized that future wars were inevitable if victor nations failed to treat defeated powers with a modicum of respect, imperialist nations refused to let go of their colonies, and if a world body like the League of Nations did not succeed in its goal of becoming an arbiter for peace.

Wilson failed to achieve many of his goals at the Versailles Conference of 1919, but he at least set in motion the establishment of the League of Nations. He might well have gotten the United States Senate to ratify an amended version of the Versailles Treaty, but his stubbornness and absolute refusal to consider any compromises and to work with Senator Lodge and other Republicans in the Senate doomed American participation in the League. Wilson accomplished a lot during his two terms as President, but his inability to get the United States to enter the League and his subsequent physical collapse cast a major pall over his presidency.

However, before Wilson became governor of New Jersey in 1910 and President in 1913, Wilson was for eight years president of Princeton University. He spent most of his professional life at Princeton, first as an undergraduate, later as a professor and finally as the university's chief executive. He came into the presidency at Princeton as a self-styled reformer who wanted to vastly expand the university and to improve its academic standards. He succeeded in raising academic standards and helped grow Princeton into the leading academic institution that it is today, but he got into real trouble when he attacked Princeton traditions such as the elitist eating clubs that he sought to abolish. His extreme behavior, his failure to acknowledge anybody who opposed him, and his total unwillingness to compromise led to his dismissal and humiliation.

If there was any indicator of what kind of national leader Wilson was to become, one can see it in his behavior as Princeton's president. Maynard does a superb job in documenting Wilson's education as a boy, his undergraduate days and his life as an academic before rising to the top of Princeton's hierarchy. I have read many fine books on Wilson's presidency, but this volume gives one perhaps the clearest look at Wilson before he moved to the White House.



Books on the American Presidency and the conduct of foreign affairs
Takeo Iguchi, *Demystifying Pearl Harbor: A New Japanese Perspective*. Tokyo: International House of Japan, 2010. 343 pp.
Translated by David Noble

President Franklin D. Roosevelt correctly predicted that December 7, 1941 would be date that that would “live in infamy.” Just why the Japanese decided to attack Pearl Harbor and who was responsible for this egregious act of aggression will be debated by American and Japanese scholars and historians for decades to come. The events and miscommunication between Tokyo and Washington before and during the fatal attack have fascinated and intrigued scholars in both the United States and Japan ever since.

There are enough books on Pearl Harbor to fill a small library, but by far the best and most conclusive tome is Takeo Iguchi’s very recent study, *Demystifying Pearl Harbor: A New Perspective from Japan*. Iguchi (1930-) comes from a distinguished family of diplomats. His grandfather was a prewar ambassador and foreign minister and his father, who was on the Japanese Embassy staff in Washington, D.C. at the time of the Pearl Harbor attack, became ambassador to both Canada and later the United States after the war. Iguchi served as an ambassador for Japan and was also a Visiting Professor at the University of Virginia and later a distinguished professor at various Japanese Universities. He is widely respected as a scholar of international law and politics.

The book begins with a fascinating recounting of what happened to the Japanese Embassy staff in Washington after Pearl Harbor. They were taken into protective custody by the FBI and quickly hustled off to the luxurious quarters of the Homestead in Hot Springs, Virginia, and later returned to Japan by ship.

Iguchi then outlines in considerable detail the deteriorating relationship between the United States and Japan. He discusses in great detail the confused nature of Japanese foreign policy and diplomacy as different factions within the country’s political hierarchy including the army, navy, and foreign ministry, struggled for power. Iguchi notes, “In a nutshell, the foreign policy pursued by Japan in 1940 and 1941 was inconsistent, unsteady, and a bit haphazard” (page 51). There was even a time when the U.S. and Japan came “tantalizingly close to a provisional agreement” only to see a further break-



down of discussions. The Japanese military was more concerned with its war in China and a potential threat from the Soviet Union until well into 1941.

Although Iguchi is a bona fide Japanese scholar, his conclusions are wholly objective and he is far more critical of the Japanese than the Americans. He totally rejects the oft quoted thesis that the Roosevelt administration deliberately provoked Japan into attacking Pearl Harbor as a backdoor method of entering the European theatre to rescue Britain. Iguchi also challenges the thesis that American economic sanctions and its demands for a complete Japanese withdrawal from Indochina and China and a termination of the tripartite pact with Italy and Germany directly forced Japan to attack the United States and Britain. However, he does note that "Tojo asserted that if Japan were to withdraw from China, four years of blood and sacrifice" on the part of the Japanese military "would be for naught" and that such a withdrawal would have disastrous consequences for Japan's control over Manchuria, Korea, and Taiwan. Only in late November did Japan conclude that chances of an agreement with the U.S. and United Kingdom were slim, that U.S. global strategy was designed to continue American "world hegemony," and that Japan had no clear path but war. A Japanese document composed on 29 November concludes, "America as yet making no preparations for war. We are truly on the verge of achieving a blitzkrieg against the U.S. that will outdo even the German blitzkrieg against the French." (page 67).

Iguchi effectively counters the frequently made claim that the negotiations between Ambassador Nomura and Secretary of State Hull were not serious. Many parties in Japan and the United States genuinely hoped for a last minute settlement. "The American approach was to create a *modus vivendi*" and the intent of Hull's sharp note of late November was a further attempt for a comprehensive settlement. By then major military powerbrokers in Japan had decided on war, but failed to inform anybody in their embassy in Washington of the impending attacks.

Iguchi devotes the latter half of his study going over in great detail the transmission of Japan's final memorandum – its version of a declaration of war against the U.S. The fact that Japan's "declaration" was delayed until the attack itself had occurred was not on



account of the incompetence of the staff of Japan's embassy, but rather a deliberate delay by the army command in Tokyo to insure surprise. Japanese allegations to this day that put the fault for the delay with the Embassy, Iguchi notes, are a ruse to absolve Foreign Minister Togo Shigenori of any responsibility for the attack. Iguchi also demonstrates that a last minute telegram sent by Roosevelt to the Japanese Emperor seeking a peaceful settlement was hijacked by the Japanese army and not delivered until the attack had begun.

Iguchi has prepared a scholarly masterpiece on Pearl Harbor that should be read by any scholar writing on the Pacific War and any professor teaching Pearl Harbor. The attack was clearly Japan's fault although American actions certainly played a role in bringing on this tragedy.

Wilson D. Miscamble, C. S. C. , *The Most Controversial Decision: Truman, the Atomic Bombs and the Defeat of Japan*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011. 174 pp.

The decision to go ahead with the planned atomic bombing of Japan was the most difficult of Harry Truman's presidency. Before he assumed the presidency upon the death of Franklin Roosevelt in April 1945, Truman knew little if anything about the development of this awesome new weapon. The decision had already been made by the Roosevelt administration to develop the bomb and if necessary use it against its remaining enemy, Japan. When Truman authorized its use, he was endorsing a plan that had long since been made.

Many critics since the 1940s have argued that the use of the atomic bombs was not necessary. They claim that Japan was on the verge of surrendering well before the two bombs were dropped over Hiroshima and Nagasaki. They feel that Truman and his administration knew that the use of the bomb was not necessary, but that they opted to go ahead anyway, perhaps to demonstrate to the Soviet Union the power of the American arsenal.

Priest, cold war historian and Notre Dame Professor Wilson D. Miscamble has written a strong and convincing defense of Truman's decision to use the bomb by giving the reader a broad picture of the state of hostilities late in the spring of 1945:

The on-the-ground reality of a Japanese military "girding for Armageddon" and convinced "that it could achieve success against



an invasion," must be well appreciated by all who genuinely seek to understand why the atomic bombs were used. In short, "Japan hardly stood on the verge of military defeat. The time has come at long last to explode permanently the myth of a Japan ready to surrender... This view has done enough damage to proper understanding of the use of the atomic bomb."

By July 1945 Japan had experienced ferocious attacks by American B-29s. Tokyo had been devastated and other metropolitan centers had faced similar destruction. The home islands were subjected to a stiff naval blockade that made food and fuel increasingly scarce. Japanese military and civilian deaths had reached three million with the numbers increasing at an alarming rate. Nevertheless, Japanese military leaders clung to their idea of *Ketsu-Go*, a plan based on the idea that if they could inflict such punishment on the invader in defense of the homeland that he would sue for peace and not occupy the country.

Historians are well aware of the fact that despite the Soviet invasion of Manchuria and the atomic bombing of Nagasaki and Hiroshima, many Japanese military leaders still wanted to continue their fierce resistance. There was also a "peace faction" among Japanese leaders and the Emperor that appeared disposed to ending the bloodshed. Miscamble argues that the atomic bombs allowed the Emperor and the "peace faction" to sue for peace.

Miscamble admits that the United States eventually would have defeated Japan without using the atomic alternative. But that would have involved continued intense bombing of Japanese cities and infrastructure, continued starvation of the Japanese through a choking naval blockade, and much higher Allied and Japanese casualties. He also points out that the Japanese military was killing civilian populations in areas it occupied in China, Southeast Asia and elsewhere at an alarming and accelerating rate and that the killing would continue until Japan finally surrendered. Miscamble notes that the Japanese military had slaughtered between seventeen and twenty-four million in its murderous rampage between Manchuria and New Guinea and that the velocity of this slaughter had increased as the Japanese realized that defeat was increasingly likely.

Miscamble argues that the atomic bombing "did the least harm possible of the available options to gain victory, and that it brought



an end to destruction, death and casualties on an even more massive scale cannot obviate this." He notes elsewhere that the focus was on ending the war on the most humane terms available and that no real thought was given to the notion that the U.S. used the bombing to impress the Soviet Union.

This short book is a very strong defense of Truman's decisions and a strong argument against Truman's critics. Whether one agrees with this assessment or not, this text is exactly the kind of book that belongs in every course on modern East Asian or Japanese history. It is well researched, clearly written, and forcefully argued.

David A. Nichols, *Eisenhower 1956: The President's Year of Crisis—Suez and the Brink of War*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2011. 346 pp.

The year of 1956 was very difficult for the Middle East. At that time President Nasser of Egypt was now in full control of Egypt and was leading a crest of nationalism against France, Great Britain, and Israel. The British and French had built and then controlled the Suez Canal, which ran through the heart of Egypt, and Israel's very existence was an affront to many Arab leaders including Nasser.

Nasser had twin goals—to seize control of the Suez Canal and to build a modern Aswan Dam on the Nile to vastly increase the amount of irrigated land available to Egyptians. Nasser hoped to get money from the United States and /or the Soviet Union, but when he signed an arms deal with the Russians, the United States decided not to help fund the dam. During that same year Nasser announced that Egypt was unilaterally nationalizing the canal. Britain and France reacted angrily, jointly attacking Egypt with Israel in late October, 1956. This invasion occurred at the same time that the Russians invaded Hungary to put down the Hungarian Revolution.

Hampered by illnesses, President Eisenhower nonetheless brilliantly managed the Suez crisis. The President refused to succumb to a major heart attack in 1956, intervening in the conflict on the side of the British and French. In fact, he denounced their invasion and asserted great pressure on the French, British, and Israelis to withdraw from Egypt. Eisenhower was the least interventionist of any postwar American president. He used the power of diplomacy to calm the Russians who had become Nasser's staunch ally and to



remove the French and British whom Eisenhower believed had absolutely no right to be there.

Author David A. Nichols moves us chronologically through the early to late states of the crisis. We see Eisenhower as an activist president who fully controlled the flow of American foreign policy. Ike had fought in World War II and understood very well the destructive capacity of major modern wars. Nichols dispels the assumption that I had always had that Secretary of State John Foster Dulles ran foreign policy while a caretaker Eisenhower did nothing but play golf. On the contrary, it was Eisenhower who very clearly set the parameters in which Dulles was allowed to work and Dulles had to clear each of his major speeches with President. Eisenhower's goal to keep the peace without diminishing American power and prestige. He was very successful in this endeavor.

Eisenhower 1956 is a brilliant and well-researched book that belongs in every course on postwar history, the Cold War and modern International Relations.



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